

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

Africa's foreign policy and political borders Nigeria and her neighbours

Uchehara, Kieran

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Africa's Foreign Policy and Political Borders: Nigeria and her Neighbours

Kieran Uchehara

MPhil

2004

Coventry University

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Abstract Ironsi, Gowon, Muhammed, Obasanjo, Buhari, Babangida, Abacha's and Abubakar's the disputes brought a response of a threat of force or aggressive use of

International boundaries inherited from colonialism have given room to territorial disputes and the existing boundary conflicts in the West African Region, and are an endemic feature of Nigeria's relations with her immediate neighbours. The thesis examines the 18 border disputes that Nigeria has been involved in since independence.

The thesis begins by setting the scene in terms understanding Nigeria's foreign policy principles and objectives since independence and, in particular, its policy towards border disputes across the continent of Africa such as the Congo/Katanga, Uganda/Tanzania, Ethiopia/Somalia and Morocco/Algeria (chapter 2). The thesis then moves on to consider the underlying problems that have faced Nigeria as regards its borders as a result of colonisation (chapter 3). As the history is traced of the stages in the definition of Nigeria's boundaries, it becomes apparent that many border issues were unresolved or that decisions were made that were likely to be contested in the future. In Chapter 4 the thesis turns to a detailed examination of the border disputes that have arisen in the last 43 three years of independence between Nigeria and her close neighbours, Benin, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon and Niger.

Chapter 5 analyses the data provided. It finds that the way the dispute was handled was closely related to the regime type. Under the liberal democratic regimes of Balewa, Shagari and Obasanjo II, disputes were largely dealt with by diplomacy and negotiation. Whereas under the autocratic regimes of military leaders such as

Generals Ironsi, Gowon, Muhammed, Obasanjo, Buhari, Babangida, Abacha's and Abubakar's the disputes brought a response of a threat of force or aggressive use of force. It concludes that liberal democracy profoundly affects how border disputes are handled and is a force for peace and stability. It concludes that liberal democracy profoundly affects how border disputes are handled and is a force for peace and stability.

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Nor could I have had completed this work without the intellectual and industrious efforts, patience, and guidance of my supervisors, Professor Roy-May and Dr. Bruce Baker. I would like to express my deep and sincere thanks to those who extended unlimited support, advice, and encouragement to me throughout the process of the research, especially at the most critical stages of my writing the thesis. I am also grateful to Associate Prof. Dr. Ramazan Özgen, the Head of International Relations Department, Atılım University, Ankara, Turkey, who allowed me to go through every part of his thesis during the work.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The aim of this study is to explore the relationship between regime type and the way they handled the border disputes between Nigeria and her immediate neighbours. In the course of explaining this, several other issues are answered: (a) How does the nature of the regime that Nigeria is in dispute with affect how Nigeria handles the crisis? (b) How willing is Nigeria to use and abide by the decisions of the International Court of Justice and other similar mediation bodies? (c) Do the disputes help in identifying Nigeria's foreign policy? (d) Which has been the most important border dispute between Nigeria and her close neighbours?

The problems that Nigeria has with her immediate neighbours are generally not solved by military means (Interview, Aboubakar, 2002, and Hisseini, 2002). In part, this is because of her status in the sub-region and the role she plays within it. Nigeria treats the member states of the Economic Community of West African States with respect. (Interview, Houndekindo, 2002, and Turay, 2002). Clearly, as many analysts have documented, Nigeria enjoys military superiority over its immediate neighbours (Imobighe, 1987). However, this fact does not lead Nigeria to disregard her neighbours and their common borders (Ate, 1992, p. 11, and Interview, Udoh, 2002).

The disharmony between Nigeria and her immediate neighbours is truly paradoxical. Part of the explanation lies in historical claims that these neighbouring countries were parts of the present Nigerian territory.

The old Oyo Empire was part of the present Republic of Benin; the Kanem-Borno Empire was part of the Republic of Chad; a sizeable component of Niger Republic was part of the Sokoto Caliphate while the present Southern Cameroon was part of Northern and Eastern Nigeria (until the referendum of 1961 in the case of the latter). Even today, the artificial boundaries separating the immediate neighbours overflow with similar peoples, cultures and aspirations (Interview, Oche, 2002). Because of these historical claims, Nigeria and her neighbours suffer insecurity (Akpan, 1973, p. 121).

A persisting sense of mutual insecurity is that, Nigeria, from her independence on 1 October 1960, has demonstrated a total lack of interest in territorial expansion at the expense of her immediate neighbours. In addition, Nigeria has consistently pursued a policy of what it calls 'good-neighbourliness', towards her immediate neighbours (Interview, Wiah, 2002, Oche, 2002, and Sambo, 2002). Yet, to these neighbours, this disposition belies a potential threat to their territorial integrity. Moreover, Nigeria's immediate neighbours are very sensitive about their relations with Nigeria (Interview, Munir, 2002, and Ojukwu, 2002, Oche, 2002, and Peters, 2002).

The problem of Nigeria and her immediate neighbours is, however, far more profound than in the manner conveyed by the preceding views. For, it touches on issues that are fundamentally and structurally related to the patterns of African territorial politics. The two African boundaries: the pre-colonial African boundaries and the boundary disputes in the post-colonial African will now be examined with reference to the border disputes.

1. 1. The Pre-Colonial African Boundaries

The idea of exclusive state jurisdiction and boundary autonomy, especially with its restrictive impact on people's movement, was an alien phenomenon to Africans in 1885. The "constant movement of population" was a characteristic of pre-colonial West African history (Ajayi, 1988, p. 2). Other historians and political geographers have stressed that African boundaries were neither formally defined nor were they delimited. Pre-colonial African boundaries, more usually, expanded or contracted as rulers gained or lost territories in the aftermath of wars. African rulers rarely maintained rigid boundaries as lines of human divide. In addition, just as there were no physical barriers to hinder population movements, the nature of state power was usually such as to be unable also to constitute effective barriers to population movement for too long a period (Ajayi, 1988, p. 2). For the European powers, however, the introduction of these legal ideas, and their enforcements, was a matter of practical necessity designed to regulate inter-imperial relations. The rationale, to them, was that the discovery and subjugation of distant lands and peoples by European explorers and conquerors produced numerous conflicting claims of sovereignty, jurisdiction and rights of trade and navigation, as well as problems of relations with indigenous peoples (Friedmann *et al.* 1969, p. 4). Africa in particular, is illustrative of the imperial model superimposed on the continent. Traditionally, A substantial part of the boundary crisis of contemporary Africa, in light of the above, is the inheritance of these imperial legal norms as the basis of ordering inter-state relations. History has indeed demonstrated that Kwame Nkrumah was a more far-sighted African nationalist leader than many of his contemporaries. Nkrumah was in favour of a long-term view of decolonisation, development and African unity, one that

necessitated both political and economic integration as a strategy for overcoming the disadvantage of fragmentation under colonialism (Ate, 1992, p. 2).

1. 2. The Boundary Disputes in the Post-Colonial Africa

The boundary crisis in post-colonial Africa has its roots in the partition of the continent by the European imperial powers in the nineteenth century. The consequence was the sudden termination of ethnic, linguistic, religious, cultural and commercial affinities that cut across administrative boundaries in Africa, in order to accommodate imperial desires and norms. The transposition of European international state system gave legal sanctity to this new boundary order, new notions of national sovereignty, territorial integrity and exclusive jurisdiction of states. Although the creation of boundaries in Africa by the colonial powers has been the source of boundary disputes in Africa, other contributory factors to the border conflicts in the continent is regime type and their foreign policies.

1. 3. Conclusion

Post-colonial border conflicts in Africa generally, and in West Africa in particular, are illustrative of the imperial model superimposed on the continent. Traditionally, psychological and human imperatives define boundary driven ideas in Africa. The legal agreements negotiated and signed among the European powers could hardly restrain these, since these arbitrarily split linguistic, ethno-cultural, religious and ancient trading communities into micro 'modern' state enclaves serving neo-colonial needs. For example, the problem of cross-border smuggling (an aspect of the conflict

between Nigeria and its immediate neighbours) thrives on the pre-colonial imperative of African trading life, which has survived the comparatively brief interlude of European superimposition. Long before the advent of colonialism a remarkable feature of African commercial life was the practice of long distance trade unhindered by administrative jurisdictions, involving "trafficking and exchange" of highly valued commodities "with strangers from other cultures" (Ajayi, 1988, p. 5). From this point of view, the solution to the harmful effect of smuggling does not lie in attempts to demarcate 'clearly' state boundaries in the sub-region. The solution lies in a new development strategy that aims primarily at integrating the individual trans-border communities into development units, free of the constraints of the legal frictions of national sovereignty and territorial integrity as bequeathed by colonialism. In order to understand the nature of the boundary disputes between Nigeria and her immediate neighbours, it is indeed appropriate to consider some approaches to the analysis of Nigeria's foreign policy.

Central focus of foreign policy analysis is on the intentions, statements, and actions of an actor often, but not always, state-directed towards the external world and the response of other actors to these intentions, statements, and actions. Beyond this, however, there is no consensus on how to define the field.

Foreign policy analyses can be descriptive, evaluative, or analytical. *Descriptive* studies establish the facts regarding foreign policy decisions, policies declared publicly, actions taken, and the official and de facto relationships among state and non-state international actors. *Foreign policy evaluation* considers the consequences of foreign policy actions and assesses the desirability and achievability of the goals.

Chapter 2: Nigeria's Foreign Policy

Although there is no subfield of political science that is completely self-contained, the study of foreign policy is somewhat unusual in that it deals with both the domestic and international arenas, moving from individual to state to systematic levels of analysis, and attempts to integrate all of these aspects into a coherent whole. Since at least the 1950s, though, researchers of foreign policy have tried to define an independent field of study that examines foreign policy (Gerner, *et al.* 1994, pp. 91-119). Reflecting the broad scope of analysis of such a discipline, the field of foreign policy analysis has been diverse and dynamic, with scholars pursuing an assortment of substantive topics through a variety of methodological approaches. Today, the study of foreign policy is quite diverse, as more and more voices enter the field and make their contributions towards the continuing goal of understanding and explaining foreign policy. The central focus of foreign policy analysis is on the intentions, statements, and actions of an actor often, but not always, state-directed towards the external world and the response of other actors to these intentions, statements, and actions. Beyond this, however, there is no consensus on how to define the field.

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This chapter does not offer a comprehensive coverage of approaches to the study of foreign policy, but it will examine two approaches to the study of foreign policy in detail. These are the traditional-classical approach closely identified as the 'Rational Actor Model', and the Behavioural-Scientific Approach. It will then outline the basis of the approach used in this study. Using this approach, it examines the broad principles that have guided Nigerian foreign policy in general and border disputes in particular.

2.1. Analysis of Foreign Policy

Several assumptions of the Realist School of International Relations form the basis of the traditional approach. The first is that states are assumed to be entities similar to 'billiard balls', whose movement is determined largely by the movement of the other balls, and contribute to various configurations in the international system. The second is that states are unitary actors, which decide, and act, with one voice for the attainment of national interests, the foremost being the security of the state. The third is the 'rational' formulation of decisions.

In the Behavioural Approach, foreign policy analysis has had a variety of forms. The overall premise of the foreign policy analysis is on the introduction of quantification, methodology, and empiricism. Unlike the first case, the Behavioural Analysis focuses on multiple causes as an explanation of the state's foreign policy behaviour.

Within the Behavioural Approach, the study of domestic politics is a part of foreign policy analysis. Foreign policy is a border region between the international

environment and domestic process, and between the two academic disciplines of political science and international relations. Therefore, the study involves the study of both the domestic political process and that of the international political process. To search for the determinants of foreign policy behaviour, there are several studies concentrating on various aspects of these two environments. Richard C. Snyder and his associates produced a groundbreaking study titled *Decision-Making as an Approach to the Study of International Politics* (Snyder, *et al.* 1962).

The decision-makers acting in the name of the state direct state action. The focus is upon the "subjective" interpretations of the official decision-makers, rather than the "objective" interpretations of observer-analyst. Decision-makers, as participants in a system of action in an organisational context, act within the internal and external settings, which consist of "a set of categories of potentially relevant factors and conditions which may affect the action of any state" (Snyder, *et al.* 1962). The three major factors determining the definition of the situation are competence, communications, information and motivation (Snyder, *et al.* 1962). The official decision-makers take care of any influences from the setting of the decision-making process (Snyder, *et al.* 1962).

Whereas Snyder and his counterparts focused on the decision-makers subjective definition of the situation, Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff, in an attempt to define the relationship between the environmental factors and foreign policy decisions, focused their arguments on both psychological environment and operational environment (Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff, 1990, pp. 67-70). Their unit of analysis is the "enviroment unit", be it an individual decision-maker, a society, rather than such abstract concepts

as state (Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff, 1990, p. 43). They identified five interrelationships between man and the environment, or what they called "milieu", that is, between the "psychomilieu", and "operational milieu": environmental determinism; free will environmentalism; environmental possibilism; cognitive behaviourism and environmental probabilism (Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff, 1990, p. 44). Cognitive behaviourism argued that operational factors are related to decision-making when, the factors are perceived by decision-makers. The first step in linking the environmental factors into policy decisions, according to this view, is to establish how the given policy-makers conceive the milieu and how they interpret the opportunities and limitations implicit therein with respect to the end to be accomplished (Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff, 1990, p. 49).

However, unlike Snyder and his counterparts, Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff contended that although the decisions are made by statesmen's perceptions of the milieu, "environmental determinism" must be taken into account, because the result of the decision will be affected by the conditions in the operational environment, regardless of whether or not the decision-makers are aware of them. Although the operational environment does not "determine" the decisions, it can "influence" them only through "cognitive behaviourism" (Dougherty and Pfaltzgraff, 1990, p. 44). Joseph Frankel argued that the objective environment is an important factor in the analysis of foreign policy decision-making. Although non-considered factors cannot influence the choice of the decision-maker, such factors may be important insofar as they set the limits to the outcome of their decisions (Frankel, 1963, p. 4). Frankel also points to individual factors, such as the values of the decision-makers. He argues that the assessment of environment is necessary in combination with the values held by the decision-makers,

together with other elements internal to the individual, such as ideology, doctrines, objectives and purposes (Frankel, 1963, p. 111).
him. Wolfers argued that factors external to the decision-maker could be James N. Rosenau went further and attempted to formulate pre-theories for foreign policy behaviour. Looking for the sources of foreign policy behaviour, Rosenau argued that a pre-theory of foreign policy comprises five central dimensions: idiosyncratic; role; governmental; societal and systemic. Idiosyncratic variables refer to the characteristics of decision-makers such as values, talents and prior experience. Individual roles refer to the behaviour of constraints upon officials irrespective of their idiosyncrasies. Governmental variables refer to those aspects of a government's structure that limit, or enhance, the foreign policy choices made by the decision-makers. Societal variables refer to non-governmental aspects of major value orientation to a society, the degree of national unity and the extent of industrialisation. Systemic variables refer to any actions occurring abroad that condition or otherwise influence the choices made by officials (Rosenau, 1988, pp. 13-44). However, the extent to which these variables play a critical role depends on the size, the level of economic development and the type of political system of the country concerned. As a result, Rosenau proposed 120 pre-theories as an explanation of foreign policy behaviour. Furthermore, Rosenau introduced the concept of "issue-area", arguing that each issue-area may have a different political process and different variables (Rosenau, 1988, pp. 13-44).

Arnold Wolfers, arguing that "single-factor theories" such as Marxism or the German School of Geopolitik are not satisfactory, proposed a combination of "pre-dispositional-psychological determinants" and "environmental determinants"

(Wolfers, 1962, p. 42). He contended that in the process of decision, or choice, elements of personality internal to the decision-maker merge with elements external to him. Wolfers argued that factors external to the decision-maker could be determinants only as they affect the hearts and wills of decision-makers (Wolfers, 1962, p. 42). Environmental factors, on the other hand, operate through a prism, represented by the personality traits of the decision-makers that may deflect or distort, transform or reflect these environmental factors in a variety of ways, depending on the internal structure of the prism.

Graham T. Allison, focusing on the domestic aspects of foreign policy decision-making, placed two models alongside the Rational Actor Model in foreign policy analysis: the Organisational Process Model, (Model II) and the Bureaucratic Politics Model (Model III). According to Model II, a decision is an output of organisational processes within the state since there are several organisations, each of which has a different set of standards, operating procedures and programs, each with different objectives and officials. According to Model III, on the other hand, during the decision-making process there emerges "pulling and hauling" among the bureaucrats. From this perspective, the output is an outcome of bargaining games and competitions among the official decision-makers. Influence in such a process will be reflected in the proposition that "where you stand depends on where you sit" (Allison, 1971, pp. 13-18).

The research design developed by Michael Brecher and his associates analysed foreign policy systems from the perspective of input-output flow (Steinberg and Stein, 1969, pp. 75-101). Agreeing with "Cognitive Behaviourism", Brecher argued that

decision-makers act in accordance with their perception of reality, not in direct response to that reality itself. The "elite images" comprise a number of closely related perceptions of the external environment such as global systems, subordinate systems and bilateral systems; and of the internal environment such as military capability, economic capability, political structure, various interests groups and competing elites.

embargo decision is a political/economic decision, through which a country seeks to

Brecher also argued that all foreign policy issues belong to four overlapping issue areas: the military-security issue area, the political-diplomatic issue area, the economic-development issue area and the cultural-status issue area. The criterion for classifying the issue areas is "substantive content", that is, objective self-evident analysis and "motivational", that is, subjective analysis (Brecher, 1972, pp. 13-14). Finally, Brecher contended that there are two reasons for any inquiry into foreign policy: firstly to investigate the pressures flowing from the real and perceived environment leading to a choice among policy options and secondly the "outcomes of the decision". The investigation of the consequences of the decision or choice warranted both for particular issue and for the foreign policy system as a whole (Brecher, 1972, pp. 14-15). The attempts to create cohesive 'foreign policy theories', there gave rise to a series of middle-range theories, one of which is crisis decision-making (Hill, 1979, pp. 7-30).

decision-makers. A crisis is a situation that threatens high priority goals of the

Brecher classified foreign policy decisions into two analytical groups. "Strategic" decisions are defined as "broad policy acts", measured by significance for the state's foreign policy system as a whole, duration of impact and the presence of a subsidiary cluster of decisions to operate that "policy"; "tactical" decisions, on the other hand, are those subsidiary clusters of decisions (Brecher, 1972, p. 14).

A second classification is in accordance with the issues of concern to a foreign policy decision: a decision related to the realisation of economic, political, military, or security objectives of a country. Therefore, economic, political and military, or diplomatic grounds are bases for making decisions. Every decision brings about implications for the country and its concerned policy. For example, an economic embargo decision is a political/economic decision, through which a country seeks to achieve its political/economic objective(s) by the use of economic force.

The third classification concerns the timing of the decision-making:

First, there are decisions made under normal conditions within organisations and bureaucratic circles, known as "routine decisions"; the second type of decisions is the "crisis decisions" made under crisis conditions (Russett and Strarr, 1992, pp. 254-7; Hermann and Hermann, 1969, p. 363).

Charles F. Hermann classified international crises as situational variables and identified two approaches. From the international system approach, a crisis is "a situation that creates an abrupt and sudden change in one or more of the basic systemic variables" (Hermann and Hermann, 1969, pp. 21-4; 411-2). As for foreign policy decision-making, the crisis acts as a "stimulus", "responded to" by the decision-makers. A crisis is a situation that "threatens high priority goals of the recipient", "restricts the amount of time for response", and "surprises the decision-makers" (Hermann and Hermann, 1969, p. 414).

Due to these characteristics of the crisis, Hermann argued, there will be changes in the flow of the decision-making process:

For example, extreme danger to "high goals" involves the highest level governmental officials to make the decision; "shortage of time", causes circumvention of usual procedures; information about the situation is scarce (Hermann and Hermann, 1969, pp. 416-7).

Taking these arguments into account, the two approaches appear useful for our

A foreign policy system, like all systems, consists of environment or setting, a group of actors, structure, and process. The design focuses on a number of inputs that flow into the decision-making machine, or decision-making process, which, in turn, produces decisions, or the output. Inputs to the system emerge from operational environment, or setting (Steinberg and Stein, 1969, p. 4), there are two sets of variables involved: external variables and internal variables. The environment "affects the results and outcomes of decisions-making" (Brecher, 1972, p. 4). That is, the decisions are filtered through the images of the decision makers. As the most important input to the foreign policy systems, the latter consists of an "attitudinal prism", made up of psychological predispositions and personality factors and an "elite image", made up of perceptions and interpretations of the environment (Brecher, 1972, pp. 11-13).

The two approaches are very important to the analysis of foreign policy as their arguments contain five principles. The first principle is that in order to make a decision, there should be a situation, or a problem, which stimulates the decision-making process. The second principle is that decision-makers, as the decision-making unit, occupy the most significant place in the making of the decisions. The third

principle is that the decision-makers act within two contexts, the operational environment or setting, which are the international system and the domestic system. Indeed, decision-makers stand as a linkage, or bridge, between these two systems. The fourth principle is that there is a decision-making process for making decisions. This involves flow of information, communication, and coordination among decision-makers. The fifth principle is that every decision is concerned with an issue-area. Taking these arguments into account, the two approaches appear useful for our evaluation of the regimes' foreign policies in Nigeria and the border disputes between Nigeria and her close neighbours. Whether identified by decision-makers, or decisions made for certain purposes, different outcomes of a decision, results to decision-making process as feedback.

2. 2. Analysis of Nigeria's Foreign Policy

The question is, what is Nigeria's foreign policy? Nigeria has entered a momentous period in its history, with refreshing, dynamic leadership, as a nation vigorously asserting itself in the legitimate pursuit of its interests in world affairs, while galvanising its great potentials in constructive and purposeful action at home. Nigeria adheres to a policy of non-alignment as a firm guarantee of national independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty, and as an essential pre-requisite for a stable international order in which big and small nations, rich and poor, can make meaningful contributions. These important political principles have guided Nigerian authorities in matters on international boundaries (Interview, Sambo, 2002, and Peters, 2002). The purpose of this section is to present the objectives and principles of Nigeria's foreign policy; change of regimes; continuities of Nigeria's foreign

policy; changes of Nigeria's foreign policy and the pragmatics of Nigeria's foreign policy. It is important here to consider Nigeria's national interests before further discussions.

2. 3. Nigeria's National Interest

Nigeria's foreign policy is based on its internal cohesion and is influenced by the necessity to consolidate its independence and freedom, develop its national economy, review its social reconstruction and maintain its unity and stability. These national objectives are translated into national interests on the international scene as Nigeria's total commitment to African solidarity and cooperation in economic, social and cultural fields; non-interference in the internal affairs of other of states; opposition to colonialism, imperialism and racism; and desire for peace, security and prosperity in the world. In pursuing these national interests, Nigeria has declared that it has no territorial ambition or any intention to dominate or force its leadership on any other country. Nigeria's foreign policy has very clearly addressed the handling of issues such as border disputes. She has all along recognised the need for peaceful co-existence with her neighbours and has formulated policies that addressed these concerns, particularly in the areas of border disputes. Nigeria's foreign policy has therefore facilitated the handling of the border disputes with her neighbours, because it has set avenues for handling and resolving them (Interview, Sambo, 2002). Given her size, population, wealth and military might, in comparison with her immediate neighbours Nigeria could have resolved the border issues by force. Indeed, in some areas, the border

conflicts have brought Nigeria to the brink of war with some of her immediate neighbours, but in almost all cases, she exercised maximum restraint and avoided unnecessary military hostilities. That is, she favoured negotiations and face-to-face discussions or arbitration. This means that Nigeria has demonstrated no territorial ambitions, but where there is a dispute, resorts to negotiations and arbitrations as the most favoured alternative (Interview, Sambo, 2002).

been and still is to favour peaceful negotiation and arbitration with a view to resolving

Nigeria in her international relations, particularly with her immediate neighbours in the sub-region, favours peaceful settlement of disputes in Africa, irrespective of the nature of the regime. Nigeria, a strong advocate of stability in the region, has sought to avoid being cast as the instigator of the instability in the region or sub-region.

state boundaries within Nigeria, but also takes up the international boundary disputes

Nigeria was among the founding members of ECOWAS, a sub-regional organisation aimed, among other things, at the economic integration of the sub-region. The formal guidelines of Nigerian foreign policy, on the other hand, clearly stipulate, among other things, the promotion and protection of Nigeria's national interest, the promotion of the economic and social welfare of Nigerians and the promotion of African integration and support for African unity (Interview, Sambo, 2002, and Wiah, 2002). In this regard, one can clearly see that the institution of ECOWAS, in fact, serves the objectives of Nigeria's stated foreign policy.

to face boundary demarcation problems early in their nation-hood. Nigeria, through

2. 4. The Objectives of Nigeria's Foreign Policy

international boundary issues. For instance, it has set up boundary commissions with

The present stated objectives of Nigerian foreign policy are not different from those of the recent past. Nigeria's current constitution is the 1999 federal constitution. The

foreign policy objectives reflected therein include, among other things, the promotion and protection of Nigeria's national interests while at the same time stressing the deep respect it has for international law and treaty obligations. Nigeria favours peaceful means of settling international disputes through negotiation, conciliation, arbitration and adjudication. Nigeria accords great importance to border issues (Interview, Sambo, 2002). Where there is a dispute or claim over a territory, Nigeria's policy has been and still is to favour peaceful negotiation and arbitration with a view to resolving the dispute or disputes. This policy, for example, has found expression in the setting up of an executive body-the National Boundary Commission (Interview, Wiah, 2002). Established many years ago, this institution seeks not only to settle the border disputes between the various states within the country with the aim of establishing acceptable state boundaries within Nigeria, but also takes up the international boundary disputes between Nigeria and her immediate neighbours. It is instructive to note that in many African countries, the past colonial masters left without clearly demarcating the international boundaries between states and, on attainment of independence, this issue became a problem for the newly independent states.

Worse still, many countries experienced different colonial administrations and, regrettably, there were no adequate measures taken to handle the boundary issues between the states. On independence, these newly independent African countries had to face boundary demarcation problems early in their nation-hood. Nigeria, through the instrument of bilateral boundary commissions, seeks to resolve all outstanding international boundary issues. For instance, it has set up boundary commissions with the Republics of Niger, Chad, Cameroon, Benin and Equatorial Guinea, with the aim of achieving mutually agreeable demarcation of their international boundaries through

discussion rather than hostilities. Nigeria and her neighbours have held many bilateral meetings (Interview, Sambo, 2002). Over the years, public enlightenment campaigns among border communities have been successful as instruments and strategies of drawing attention to these issues and the primary need to resolve the boundary demarcation peacefully. There is no doubt that the national interest that emerged in support of these broad objectives reflects the objective of national cognitive self-perception by the Nigerian foreign policy-makers. The definition, interpretation and elaboration of these objectives, interests and principles of Nigerian foreign policy should always be the over-riding concerns of Nigeria's leaders.

The second stated objective is legal equality of states. The attractiveness of this objective to Nigeria is not simply in the situational context of de facto asymmetry in the structure of global inter-dependence that makes underdeveloped countries like Nigeria remain on the 'periphery,' susceptible to control and domination. Nigeria's veneration for the principle of legal equality is a function of her belief and conviction that a well-ordered and peaceful community at both international and regional levels requires the mutual and reciprocal respect of actors. However, Nigeria has not interpreted the concept of legal equality of states to mean equal capacity of states for duties and responsibilities in the international system. This perhaps explains why, for instance, Nigeria has undertaken a large financial burden in supporting the annual budget of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and why Nigeria has been spending her resources to finance the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) (now the African Union, AU) and sponsored peacekeeping in Africa (Olusanya and Akindele, 1986, p. 3).

The third objective is non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states. The commitment to this principle has sanctioned what in effect amounts to a restrictive interpretation of the country's national interest and definition of her effective security boundaries. As a dominant regional power in Africa, Nigeria's security boundaries are not coterminous with her territorial boundaries; the former extend beyond the latter. If, for instance, a conflict poses security problems for Nigeria, as it often does, why should the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of her neighbours be allowed to prevent Nigeria from protecting her security interests if need be? In support of the principle of non-interference by Nigeria in the domestic affairs of other states, there has been argument that Nigeria must consciously make a distinction between 'domination' and 'leadership' in her foreign policy behaviour in Black Africa. Otherwise, the francophone states in West Africa would use the threat to strengthen their economic and security dependence on France.

The fourth objective is multilateralism, which explains not only Nigeria's enthusiastic and instinctive search for membership in key international organisations on both global and regional levels but also her support for and leadership in the establishment of some regional organisations. Believing that international organisations provide numerous opportunities for multi-lateral negotiations and collaboration among states, Nigeria has sought membership of the United Nations (UN) and its Specialised Agencies, the Commonwealth of Nations, and the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) (Olusanya, 1967, pp. 297-306).

According to the fifth stated operating objective, Africa is the cornerstone and nerve-centre of Nigeria's foreign policy. In recognition of the historical and geographical fact that Nigeria belongs to Africa and convinced of what late Azikiwe called "the historic mission and manifest destiny of Nigeria in Africa" (Zik, 1960, p. 71), Abubakar's democratic regime made it clear that Africa must and would claim first attention in Nigeria's external relation and preoccupation.

2. 5. Changes of Regimes

From 1960 to 1998, Nigeria at the national level witnessed twelve regimes. President Nnamdi Azikiwe and Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa (1960-1966) led the first. General Johnson Aguiyi Ironsi (1966) led the second. General Yakubu Gowon (1966-1975) led the third. General Murtala Muhammed (1975-1979) led the fourth. General Obasanjo (1976-1979) led the fifth. Alhaji Shehu Shagari (1979-1983) led the sixth. General Muhamadu Buhari (1984-1985) led the seventh. General Babangida (1985-1993) led the eighth. Ernest Shonekan (1993) led the ninth. General Sani Abacha (1993-1998) led the tenth. General Abubakar Abdulsalami (1998-1999) led the eleventh. The twelfth is the present regime of President Olusegun Obasanjo (1999-2003).

The changes of government might be expected to have led to changes in Nigeria's foreign policy. Yet, changes in government do not necessarily mean changes in the content of a nation's foreign policy. However, a change in leadership of government may lead to a change in style of diplomacy (Northedge, 1976, pp. 60-5).

The history of Nigeria's foreign policy divides into two major periods. With the civil war years as an interlude, the policy of civilian rule from 1960 until the coups of 1966 can be described as 'conservative' and cautious. Nigeria was seen as a 'sleeping giant'. However, once the civil war was successfully completed and the huge revenues from the sale of petroleum began to pour in, Nigerian foreign policy became more 'active', and even radical. It was not the content of the policy that changed but the behaviour and actions undertaken to support policy that changed (Delancey, 1976, pp. 39-53).

How has the conduct of Nigerian foreign policy objectives and principles been affected by changes of regimes and heads of states? From the democratic regime Balewa, Shagari to Obasanjo, Nigeria has always made it clear in her foreign policy pronouncements and actions that:

In spite of her comparative advantage of size, population and resources over many countries in Africa, particularly in West Africa, Nigeria would seek to neither dominate other countries nor carry out aggressive military action against them. Various Nigerian leaders recognise Nigeria's so-called "manifest destiny" to lead Africa (Baker, 1984, p. 78).

On coming to power in 1966, Major-General Johson Aguiyi Ironsi explained Nigeria's role in Africa like this:

In the whole sphere of Nigeria's external relations, the government would attach the greatest importance to our African policy. We are aware that because of our population and potential, the majority opinion in the civilised world looks to us to provide responsible leadership in Africa. Moreover, we realise that we shall be

judged, largely, by the degree of success or failure with which these expectations are thrown on us. We are convinced that whether in political, economic, or cultural spheres, our destiny lies in our role in the continent (Stremlau, 1977, p. 3).

This view of Nigeria's manifest destiny has been, maintained by successive Nigerian leaders. In 1979, Shagari made the same statement: The destiny of Nigeria is linked with the fortunes of all the countries in Africa and all the peoples of African descent abroad" (Tijani and Williams, 1981, p. 91). In spite of Northedge's views, Nigeria's foreign policy during General Obasanjo's regime changed from the conservative and moderate policies of the Balewa and Shagari regimes. According to Olajide, Aluko's "patience, pragmatism and caution had virtually ceased to be Nigeria's diplomacy". He added, "The Federal military government has adopted a radical militant style in the conduct of external relations" (Olajide, 1976a, pp. 409-11). The 'new' style placed great emphasis on Nigeria's African foreign policy.

General Obasanjo, in his address to the Senior Army Officers' Training Seminar in Ibadan on 17 January 1976, declared: "Nigeria has often appeared to be sitting on the fence of important issues, much to the detriment of our image and interest especially in Africa". According to him, this is a reflection of lack of purpose and inability to identify what constitutes Nigeria's national interest. Obasanjo further proclaimed that:

"One of the objectives on foreign affairs of his military government was to create the necessary political and economic conditions in Africa and the rest of the world in order to facilitate the defense of the independence and territorial integrity of all African countries" (Garba, 1976, p 21).

His declaration implied heavy criticism of the foreign policy *posture* of the previous governments. The above explanations indicate that the successive regimes and personalities shared similar views on the continent of Africa.

2. 6. Continuities of Nigeria's Foreign Policy

There is an element of continuity in Nigeria's foreign policy, in that all of the regimes subscribe to good neighbour relationships in Africa. What has varied is how the successive regimes interpreted these principles and the extent to which other intra- and-extra-Nigerian events shaped the execution of these principles (Ogunbadejo, 1980, p. 765). From 1960 up to 1966, Nigeria's foreign policy was quiet and conservative, with political leaders content to remain within the evolving neo-colonial framework. This period was also one dominated by domestic upheaval, with the breakdown of the Westminster system prior to 1966, the coups and civil war in the latter half of that decade, and the period of reconciliation and readjustment in the early 1970s.

The change in the level of commitment to foreign policy initiative was more accentuated in 1975, following the removal from power of Yakubu Gowon by Murtala Mohammed.³ The buoyant economy and the desire to play a role in international affairs commensurate with the country's perceived strength provided the impetus for a radical shift in the content. This indicates that the availability of oil revenue in the 1970s had a considerable impact on Nigeria's foreign policy options (Bolaji, 1979, pp. 150-168). However, detailed assessment of the claim that Africa is the centrepiece of Nigeria's foreign policy occurs in chapter five, within the

examination of the foreign policy of the regimes and heads of state in relation to their roles in the border disputes between Nigeria and her immediate neighbours.

the Liberian and Sierra Leonean crises, the confrontation between Ethiopia and

Again, during the invasion of Nigerian territory by Cameroonian gendarmes that resulted to the death of five Nigerian soldiers in May 1981, Shagari's government was pressurised by the Nigerian army to respond militarily to the killings. However, Shagari resisted the pressure not because his government lacked the capacity to resolve the issue militarily but because he preferred to use a peaceful solution to the conflict. In March 1983, when the damming of Kalia River in Cameroon reduced the flow of water to Borno State in Nigeria the fears that the River Benue would be dammed prompted Nigeria to take the issue to the International Court of Justice. Meanwhile, Olusegun Obasanjo's present regime is trying to establish good relationships with Nigeria's immediate and distant neighbours. Although we have observed Nigeria's foreign policy *posture* in Africa, it is possible that the *conduct* of the foreign policies of the regimes and heads of state in the continent have never been constant since independence. Aspiration is one thing and its achievement is another. There are differences in their approach to the political problems in Africa (Olajide, 1977b, pp. 163-195; Williams and Turner, 1978, pp. 132-172). The scope of the thesis, of course, does not cover all cases in Africa, but selected cases (Shaw and Aluko, 1983, pp. 182-3).

2.9 Nigeria and the Congo Conflict

2.7. Pragmatics of Nigeria's Foreign Policy

First, the following questions need addressing: Did the regime and head of state in

All Nigerian regimes and heads of state have, since independence, been complying to with the OAU principles in the interests of peace and order in Africa. To some extent,

Nigeria is an important mediator in African disputes such as the Congo crisis, the disagreements between Uganda and Tanzania, the Chadian crisis, the Ghanaian crisis, the Liberian and Sierra Leonean crises, the confrontation between Ethiopia and Somalia, and the Morocco and Algeria disputes.

2. 8. Nigeria and the invasion in Benin

Under General Muhammed regime, after the unexpected mercenaries' attack on Benin on 16 January 1977, Nigeria issued an unequivocal condemnation of that "barbaric and senseless act of aggression against a sovereign and progressive African state" (Federal Ministry of Information, 1977). Nigeria's condemnation revealed her sense of outrage over an invasion that took place at a time when several African heads of states were in Lagos for the official opening of the second black cultural festival (FESTAC). At the request of the Benin authorities, a military co-operation agreement was negotiated between Nigeria and Benin and signed in Lagos in April 1978. That agreement made provision for the training of Benin's military personnel in Nigeria's defence institutions and for a joint patrol by their armed forces of their common borders (Mohammed, 1983, pp. 10-11). Nigeria's foreign policy *posture* towards the invasion in Benin shows that she wanted to maintain good relations with Benin.

2. 9. Nigeria and the Congo Conflict

First, the following questions need addressing: Did the regime and head of state in Nigeria, during the Congo dispute, support the Katanga secession? How did Nigeria react to the secession? What were the principles that guided the action Nigeria took

against the Katanga secession and why? Has Nigeria's African foreign policy changed due to changes of regime and head of state?

History holds that Nigeria never supported the secession in Katanga. Nigeria did not take any side because of her desire to uphold the legality and constitutionality of the Congo. Nigeria's government wanted a united Congo and to preserve the territorial integrity of Congo. Equally important was Nigeria's fear of the revelation of the fragility of the African system. However, Nigeria's government only advised for the settlement of the dispute, based on respect for the charter of the United Nations. The Nigerian government sincerely took a moderate position; worked for the solutions to the crisis and later gave full support to the actions and decisions that were agreed upon by the United Nations. Nigeria's foreign policy *posture* to the Congo dispute also emphasised the Nigerian government's principle of non-interference in another country's internal affairs. We can conclude the argument by saying that Nigeria's policy was primarily concerned with the preservation or restoration of the territorial status quo in Congo.

2. 10. Nigeria and the Tanzania and Uganda Dispute

When President Julius Nyerere of Tanzania participated to the fall of Field Marshal Idi Amin of Uganda's regime in November 1978, Nigeria insisted that if Nyerere was allowed to get away with that without any reaction by African states, then that would lead to interventions by African states in the affairs of other African states (Margaret, 1981, p. 10). Nigeria's reaction to that dispute is comparable to the reaction of the international community to Iraq's occupation of Kuwait in 1991. Nigeria criticised

the participation of Tanzanian troops in the fall of Idi Amin's regime. Nigeria, subsequently, refused to grant diplomatic recognition to the new regime. The Nigerian government's reaction to this dispute was very strong. In 1979, Nigeria closed down her High Commission in Kampala. That was, partly, to save the lives of the Nigerian diplomats in Uganda and partly as a gesture against Tanzania's military involvement in the overthrow of Idi Amin. In N'Djamena, their French colleagues (Nolutshungu, 1996, pp. 123-5) treated the Nigerian peacekeeping force in an

The Nigerian government's reaction to that dispute shows her commitment to the OAU principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of member states and her respect for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of member states. Much as the Nigerian leaders disliked Amin, they believed Nyerere was an adventurer who was determined on establishing his hegemony over Uganda, East and Central Africa (May, 1998, p. 8). Nyerere's involvement of his troops in Rwanda and Uganda confirmed these fears about his goals in East Africa in general. As far as the Nigerian government was concerned, Nyerere's approach to African problems was intolerable. These values and principles shaped Nigeria's position during the Tanzanian and Ugandan dispute of 1978-1989.

2. 11. Nigeria and the Chadian Conflict

In the Chadian dispute, Nigeria played a significant role in ending hostilities among the internal factions. On 25 February 1979, Nigeria called for a reconciliation conference and offered to host it in Kano. A few days later followed the decision to send the Nigerian peacekeeping force to the Chadian capital, with the support of Egypt. The first contingent of the Nigerian peacekeeping force, which was about

eight hundred in number, arrived in Chad on 10 March 1979, with a further thousand expected to follow. However, misconception dogged Nigeria in her principal mediation effort and so she was judged to be an interventional power conspiring against Chad's independence (Büijtenhuijs, 1987, pp. 123-6). The intervention force and the Kano conference were viewed with scepticism "in political circles" in N'Djamena (Nolutshungu, 1996, p. 94). In N'Djamena, their French colleagues (Nolutshungu, 1996, pp. 123-5) treated the Nigerian peacekeeping force in an unfriendly manner. The objectives of the Nigerian troops were not certain as claimed, but limited to ensuring the observance of the ceasefire and to permitting free movement in the city. It is arguable that Nigeria had an independent diplomacy of its own, national conceptions of its African role, and an idea of national reconciliation grounded in its own experience, all of which made Nigeria a dependable ally. Unlike Sudan and Egypt, she was the sincere preference of the Chadian factions.

2. 12. Nigeria and the Liberian Conflict

Nigeria's assumption of the lion's share of the political and economic costs in West Africa has been impressive. In 1990, as the crisis in Liberia escalated, there was a need for security. Four factors determined Nigeria's role. Firstly, there was a close personal relationship between General Babangida of Nigeria and Liberia's leader, Samuel Doe. Secondly, America's refusal to intervene, preferring instead to visit Monrovia to evacuate the American citizens. Thirdly, the dispute spiralled refugee problems in Sierra Leone, Ghana, The Gambia, Guinea, and Ivory Coast. The fourth was the lack of OAU initiative. The fifth was French economic interest in West Africa, and Paris' support for Charles Taylor encouraged Nigeria to see herself as a

bridge in this residual colonial divide. Taking Nigeria's position in West Africa into account, Babangida apparently involved Nigerian troops (in the form of the Nigerian Police Force Line (NPFL) from the onset of the Liberian dispute. In respect of her attitudes towards the Liberian crisis, Nigeria adopted a diplomatic approach by going through ECOWAS to intervene between Doe's government and Charles Taylor's forces. Nigeria, accordingly, convened the standing mediation committee, the ECOMOG, an ECOWAS inner circle, to act in the dispute and find a settlement to the dispute.

Given its extensive military and diplomatic intervention in the pre-1997 Liberian civil war, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) remained engaged in diplomatic efforts to address the Liberian crisis. Several meetings were organised by the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council in order to discuss the Liberian issue. In March 2002, ECOWAS hosted a peace meeting in Abuja, Nigeria, that was attended by representatives of the Liberian government and political opposition groups.

With the recent crisis in Liberia in 2003, President Obasanjo of Nigeria made a trip to Monrovia in July 2003, and made an asylum offer to President Charles Taylor of Liberia. On 11 August 2003, President Taylor turned over the reins of power to his vice-president, Moses Blah, and boarded a Nigerian plane for the southern state of Calabar of Nigeria, where he began his life in exile. This move by Nigeria can be seen as a necessary step to end the bloodbath in Africa's oldest republic and the asylum should be considered on humanitarian grounds as being in order to save the Liberian people from fighting as well as to save the peace process in Liberia.

2. 13. Nigeria and the Sierra Leonean Conflict

In February 1998, the military wing of the Economic Community of West African States, ECOMOG, once again, led by Nigeria, launched a military attack that led to the collapse of the rebel forces and its expulsion from Freetown. On 10 March 1998, President Kabbah was returned to office. The Security Council terminated the oil and arms embargo and strengthened the office of the Special Envoy to include UN military liaison officers and security advisory personnel. The mission monitored and advised efforts to disarm combatants and restructure the nation's security forces. Fighting continued with the rebel alliance gaining control of more than half of the country. In December 1998, the alliance began an offensive to retake Freetown and in January 1999 overran most of the city. In the same month, ECOMOG troops retook the capital and again installed the civilian government.

Negotiation between the Government and the rebels began in May 1999 and on 7 July all parties to the conflict signed an agreement in Lome to end hostilities and form a government of national unity. On 22 October 1999, the Security Council authorised the establishment of UNAMSIL, a new and much larger mission with a maximum of 6,000 military personnel, including 260 military observers, to assist the government and the parties in carrying out the decisions of the Lome peace agreement. To head the new mission, the Secretary-General appointed Mr. Oluyemi Adeniji (Nigeria) as his Special Representative in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL, 2003). Nigeria's commitment to democracy in Sierra Leone and its leadership of ECOMOG is an enhancement of her sub-regional potential rather than an erosion of it.

Acheampong and Utuka, followed by the executions of six more military men

2. 14. Nigeria and the Ethiopia and Somalia Dispute

In 1964, Ethiopian and Somali forces clashed in the Ogaden region of Ethiopia. In 1972, tension between the two countries increased along their border. In July 1977, Somalia attacked Ethiopia across the Ogaden Desert in pursuit of its irredentist claims to the ethnic Somali areas of Ethiopia (UNDP, 2000). In March 1978, Somali forces retreated into Somalia. In 1982, Ethiopian forces invaded Somalia along their common border.

The border dispute between the two neighbours is based on the fact that neither Somalia nor Ethiopia respects the political boundaries drawn by the British, French, and Italian colonies. Since independence, successive Somali governments had sought to reincorporate those Somalis living in Ethiopia into Greater Somalia. Nigeria chaired the OAU *ad hoc* commission, which advocated the restoration of peace between Somalia and Ethiopia on the basis of respect for colonial boundaries (Shaw and Aluko, 1983, p. 42). President Siad Barre of Somalia and the forces loyal to him took political asylum in Nigeria and he died in exile in Nigeria (United States Institute of Peace, 2003).

2. 15. Nigeria and the Ghana Conflict

On 15 May 1979, Flight-Lieutenant J. J. Rawlings organised a confrontation between officers and men to get the bad elements that had led Ghana into ruin. The first actions taken by Rawlings and his men were the executions on 16 July of Acheampong and Utuka, followed by the executions of six more military men

including General Akuffo and Afrifa, and three former heads of state. The executions continued, and up to 100 senior officers and businessmen were tried in camera by impromptu People's Courts. Heavy sentences were publicised, as were the declared assets of several top military men, including some of those already executed. International repercussions followed, the most painful was the cutting off by Nigeria of the crude oil supply to Ghana, thereby deprived Ghana of 80 per cent of crude oil imports from Nigeria which caused a severe shortage of oil in Ghana (Yedder, *et al.* 1983-84, p. 37).

2. 16. Nigeria and the Moroccan and Algerian Dispute

Morocco laid claims to western sections of southern Algeria, particularly in the Tindouf area where large deposits of iron ore are located. Morocco's claim is based on the historical argument that the territories had been part of Morocco in pre-colonial times. Between July and October 1962, Morocco launched attacks on Algeria in this area. Again, between September and November 1963, Morocco attacked Algeria in the same place (Huth, 1996, p. 221). Morocco's interest in the mineral resources of Tindouf was undoubtedly a factor influencing Morocco's policies in its dispute with Algeria, but the Moroccan territorial claims also had much deeper and more extensive roots. The mere location of the line drawn by France just to the west of the rich Tindouf area was only one factor among many and not even the most salient. More basic reasons, social and political, rather than geographic, explain the border dispute between the two countries (Touval, 1972, p. 26). Nigeria's diplomacy was very active in this dispute. Between 1977 and 1978, Nigeria approached the Soviet Union and the various African countries that were involved in the conflict without success.

Although it was clear that Nigeria's diplomacy was unable to prevent the dispute from developing between the two countries. Nigeria's move provided some momentum to the restoration of peace between Morocco and Algeria.

2.17. Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated that successive Nigerian governments have been faithful to the principles governing Nigeria's African policy laid down at the start of its independence. Every example of intention in the disputes has shown the consistent use of Nigeria's support for African unity and Nigeria's interest in Africa (Webber and Smith, 2002, p. 3). Nigeria's roles in those African conflicts have shown that a medium power state can act cooperatively to provide solutions for African problems. What has been demonstrated on the broad foreign policy point will later be applied to the narrower issue of border disputes (Figures 4. 1, 4. 2, XXX, and Y).

Chapter 3: The Creation of Nigeria's Boundaries

This chapter explores the processes that took place in the delimitation of Nigeria's international boundaries and describes the various boundary alignments that altered the shape and area of the country. The importance of defining Nigeria's boundaries literally on paper, on maps and on the ground cannot be over emphasised. Without these processes, especially the last one, adjacent territories may be making claims and counter claims after realising that their resources have fallen to the other party. In executing all these processes, the map is very important in the allocation of territories and description of their limits. This explains that after surveys and during the demarcation of the boundaries, the signed map is needed to show the course of the boundary in relation to the natural landmarks around it. The issues that form the framework for our analysis in this chapter are: stages in the definition of Nigeria's boundaries, allocation and map-based description of Nigeria's boundaries, ground-based delimitation survey and mapping of Nigeria's boundaries, ground translation of Nigeria's boundaries shown on the map, the scheme of the definition of Nigeria's boundaries, the Nigeria-Benin boundary, the Coast to Latitude 9° North, Latitude 9° North to the River Niger, the Nigeria-Cameroon boundary, the pre-war Nigeria-Cameroon boundary, the Sea to Cross-River rapids, the Cross-River to Yola Arc, the Yola Arc to Chad, the Post-War Nigeria-Cameroon boundary and the Nigeria-Chad boundary.

3. 1. Stages in the Definition of Nigeria's Boundaries

Boundary definition provides limits to a property, defining the area wherein the owner can operate without being accused of transgression. Furthermore, boundaries provide a unit or units of cartographic representation which can be defined in three stages namely (a): allocation, (b) delimitation and (c) demarcation (Jones, 1945, p. 57). These stages can be modified as follows: allocation and map-based description, ground-based delimitation survey and mapping, and ground translation of the boundaries shown on the map (demarcation).

3. 2. Allocation and Map-Based Description

A major milestone in the Scramble for Africa of the 19th century was the Berlin Conference of 1884-1885, at which rules were drawn up, the application of which ultimately led to the partition of Africa and the resultant allocation of territories to various European countries. At the time of the Conference, in which British claims to the territory adjacent to the Gulf of Guinea were recognised, the Lagos area was about the only part of Nigeria with which the British colonial administrators were familiar. With respect to the other parts, they laid claims before acquiring them.

Two years after the Berlin Conference, Justus Perthe published the map of Africa titled *Spezial Karte von Africa* (Special Map of Africa). This German map later served as the map on which the descriptions of boundaries of most of the allocated territories were based. The map annexed to the convention of June 14, 1898 between Great Britain and France composed of Sections IV and V of the 1892 edition of Justus

Perthe's map. This map indicated all Nigerian boundaries except the section from 9° N to River Niger of the Western boundary. Furthermore, the depiction of all the boundaries with straight lines and arcs made them easy to describe textually. During these processes, the boundary that runs from Niger to Chad was the longest boundary line in Nigeria before the First World War. Compare the following description for illustration of its simplicity:

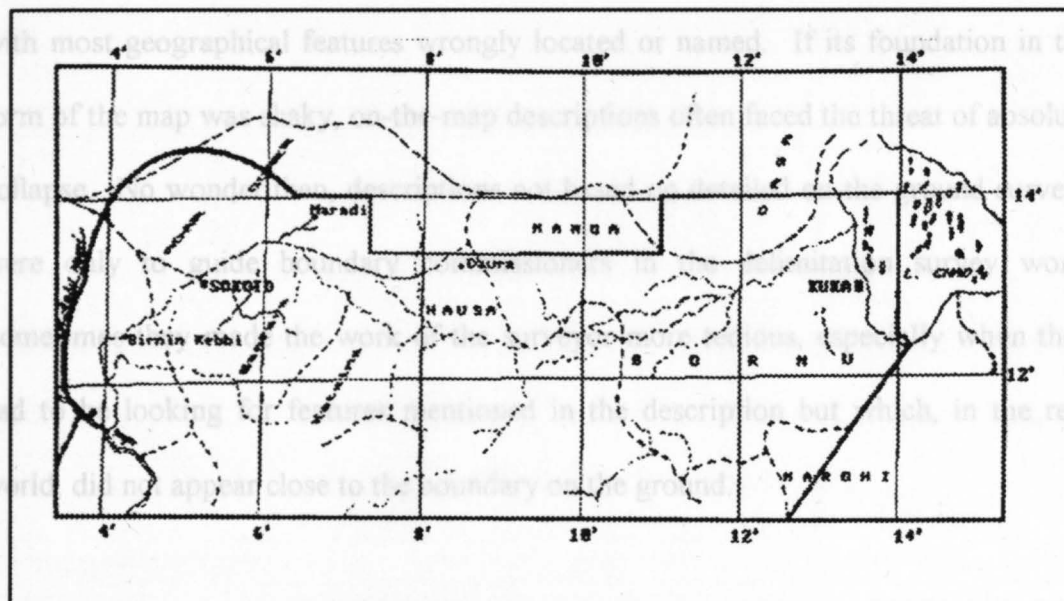
From Giri the boundary follows the midway of the Niger as far as the mouth of a dry watercourse supposed to be Dalul Mauri. It follows the watercourse till it meets the circumference of a circle drawn from the centre of the town of Sokoto, with a radius of 100 miles. It follows the northern arc of this circle until it intersects the 14th parallel for the second time. It then follows the 14th parallel for 70 miles; then descends due South to latitude. 13° 20' North; then eastward along this parallel for a distance of 250 miles; then regains the 14th parallel, and follows it as far as meridian, passing 35' east of Kuka and ultimately this meridian southward, till its intersection with the southern shore of Lake Chad (Ravenstein, 1898, pp. 73-5).

geometrical shapes: straight horizontal and vertical lines and arc described from Sokoto. The only surveyed section delineated with an irregular line is the section of the boundary running along the Dalul Mauri River.

Where boundary courses followed natural linear features such as big rivers, or crests of long ridges, map-based description can be as good as description based on surveys.

The only problems here are (a) in order to place such natural boundary lines on the map, their positions need fixing; (b) some natural boundary lines had in the past left boundary commissions confused because they were ambiguous. For example, a boundary line defined by a river or a lake could change with tides or seasons as in the

Figure 1. Niger to Lake Chad boundary in 1898 (straight lines and arc)



Source: J. Thompson. 1886. Niger and Central Sudan Sketches. *Scottish Geog. Magazine*, 2 [no volume] [no number], [no page].

See Figure 3. 1, for the illustration of the frontier described above. Obviously, one can observe the use of perfect geometrical shapes: straight horizontal and vertical lines and arc described from Sokoto. The only surveyed section delineated with an irregular line is the section of the boundary running along the Dalul Mauri River.

Where boundary courses followed natural linear features such as big rivers, or crests of long ridges, map-based description can be as good as description based on surveys. The only problems here are: (a) in order to place such natural boundary lines on the map, their positions need fixing; (b) some natural boundary lines had in the past left boundary commissions confused because they were ambiguous. For example, a boundary line defined by a river or a lake could change with tides or seasons as in the

case of the border from Yola to Chad during the survey of the boundary from Yola to Chad in 1902, and (c) basing descriptions on maps whose authenticity is still doubtful with most geographical features wrongly located or named. If its foundation in the form of the map was shaky, on-the-map descriptions often faced the threat of absolute collapse. No wonder then, descriptions not based on detailed on-the-ground surveys were only to guide boundary commissioners in the delimitation survey work. Sometimes they made the work of the surveyor more tedious, especially when they had to be looking for features mentioned in the description but which, in the real world, did not appear close to the boundary on the ground.

As vague as map-based description of boundaries is, at least it had provided a frame with which the colonial administration could work. The allocation of territories and map-based descriptions of boundaries were included in the treaties that were procured between, and signed by, concerned parties several years before the delimitation surveys (Asiwaju and Adeniyi, 1989, p. 182). The process was a temporary measure pleasing to the European Powers who had gained some territories but inconvenient for the indigenes living around the boundaries. Evidently, the indigenes were not aware of what had transpired at the Berlin Conference and carried on their normal duties without taking note of any artificial barriers that, of course, were not visible (Asiwaju and Adeniyi, 1989, p. 182). Considering that language plays a significant role in transactions, we can now argue that communication between the colonial masters and the indigenes was the major obstacle, as the two parties did not find it easy to communicate with each other. Even the translators might have found the original concepts difficult to reproduce. At this point, the extension of the European influence and the colonial government to the boundary area introduced constraints that caused

friction along the boundaries. That was what made the next stage of the cartographic definition urgent.

3. 3. Ground-Based Delimitation Survey and Mapping

Delimitation simply means the setting of the edge or the limit at which something ends. Map-based description is therefore a form of delimitation, even though it is not definite, not concrete and not realistic as in the case of delimitation survey and demarcation. There are three stages to the carrying out of Ground-based delimitation: (a) reconnaissance; (b) survey, and (c) mapping. While the map-based description was done on the map without necessarily taking the people to the area around the frontier, delimitation, reconnaissance and survey took the people to the boundary area. Reconnaissance, by definition, involves visiting the boundary area, identifying the objects mentioned in the map-based description and observing the characteristics of such objects to see if they were permanent enough to be used in defining a boundary. The reconnaissance party looks for some other features that can be used as reference points in the boundary survey that will follow. These activities in fact involve clearing obstacles such as trees, bushes around the boundary and, if possible, establishing temporary beacons that make survey work easier (Asiwaju and Adeniyi, 1989, p. 185). During reconnaissance, many alterations are often made to the boundary line defined by the textual description. In the case of Nigerian boundaries, for instance, compromises were reached in order to re-unite villages or villagers and their lands separated by the provisional boundary lines.

Again, the delimitation survey methods and procedures were specified in the treaty relating to territorial allocation. Survey is necessary in rendering the boundary line into mappable data. This aspect of boundary definition is more important than any other stage, including boundary demarcation. Without the delimitation survey, this is simply a process of partitioning and the frontier cannot be accurately represented on the map that usually accompanies the agreement signed by the two parties. In addition, if the delimitation is done on a map without a proper survey, it will be difficult to draw an accurate boundary, as map-based descriptions have demonstrated. In the early years of colonial rule in Nigeria, boundary surveys provided the most accurate cartographic data for the mapping of the country, and the area surrounding the boundary was properly surveyed (Winterbotham, 1928, pp. 173-186). In a country like Nigeria that was, in the early decades of the 20th century, unable to develop a cartographic data base, provision of control data constitutes a part of the boundary survey and took a considerable portion of the time spent on the whole survey. In most cases, the boundary commissions found it necessary to relate boundary lines to permanent structures such as the rulers' palaces in some big towns. Up until the time the two Nigerian Protectorates were amalgamated and the Nigeria Survey Department created, the boundary commissioners were appointed by the Colonial Office (Winterbotham, 1928, p. 186). Rather, it is the description of the survey points and the courses on the ground. For example, the arc described in the

However, the conduct of the delimitation surveys was guided by relevant clauses in the agreement respecting the boundary in question. Where alterations in the agreement were made in favour of the British government during the delimitation survey or where the boundary description in an agreement was conformed with, British Commissioners used their discretion. Controversial issues, especially those

that deviated adversely from the wordings of the agreements, were referred to the Intelligence Division of the War Office and the Colonial Office for advice and directives. One would expect a similar procedure in the case of the other party.

in the demarcation exercise that followed the delimitation survey, the use of textual

Evidently, the boundary surveys were conducted with a view to making maps of the boundary accompany the agreements signed by both parties. Such maps provided documents, which as later developments along the boundaries revealed, were more permanent than the objects, such as the beacons and pillars used in demarcation, which had often disappeared. The maps showed the course of the frontier, topography, drainage, geology and the settlements within the area around the boundary. Such maps were produced at different scales, the most common of which were 1:500,000, 1:250,000 and 1:200,000 depending on the length of the boundary in question. For instance, a scale of 1:200,000 may be favourable for the northern boundary of Nigeria (River Niger to Chad) whereas this scale may be too small for the Nigeria-Benin boundary.

demarcation or on-the-ground translation of the boundary has not been carried out. This involves the use of beacons, pillars, walls or other artificial

A boundary line on a map is only valid insofar as it can be identified on the ground. This is where textual description comes onto the scene again. This time, it is not the narrative concerning the lines drawn on a map. Rather, it is the description of the survey points and the courses on the ground. For example, the arc described in the Yola-Chad section of Nigeria's eastern boundary has its centre in Yola. At the scale used for the maps produced, Yola could only be shown in a much-generalised manner. The textual description shows the exact point in Yola that served as the centre of the arc. The textual description, which was based on surveys, was done in steps using series of straight lines except where there was a river forming part of the boundary.

The Nigeria-Benin boundary from the coast to the middle of the River Niger, a distance of 696 kilometres, was described in sixty-five steps.

In the demarcation exercise that followed the delimitation survey, the use of textual description in addition to maps was found to be immensely helpful. In fact, the Anglo-French agreement on the Nigeria-Dahomey (Benin) boundary of 19 October 1906 included a clause that stated: "in the event of any divergence being found between the line as described above and as indicated on the maps, the description shall be held to be authoritative" (HMS Office, 1906, p. 12).

3. 4. On-the-Ground Translation of Boundaries shown on the Map

Boundary surveys usually produce data for maps that show the boundary line as a part of the treaty to be signed by interested parties. However, nothing forestalls boundary disputes if the boundary demarcation or on-the-ground translation of the boundary has not been carried out. This involves the use of beacons, pillars, walls or other artificial features. These marks should be visible, inter-visible and difficult to be removed. They show travellers and soldiers when they have reached the boundary between two countries, which, if the map can be relied upon, can easily be identified on the ground.

The demarcation of the boundary also sometimes involves making rigorous surveys, if the marks left during the delimitation survey had been removed. Furthermore, surveys are necessary for the location of points whose coordinates were fixed during the delimitation survey, and for the location and alignment of pillars. Some clearings are made along the boundary for the maintenance of the boundary marks and for the

movement of immigration and customs officials and the police posted there, so preventing illegal crossing, smuggling of goods and evasion of justice.

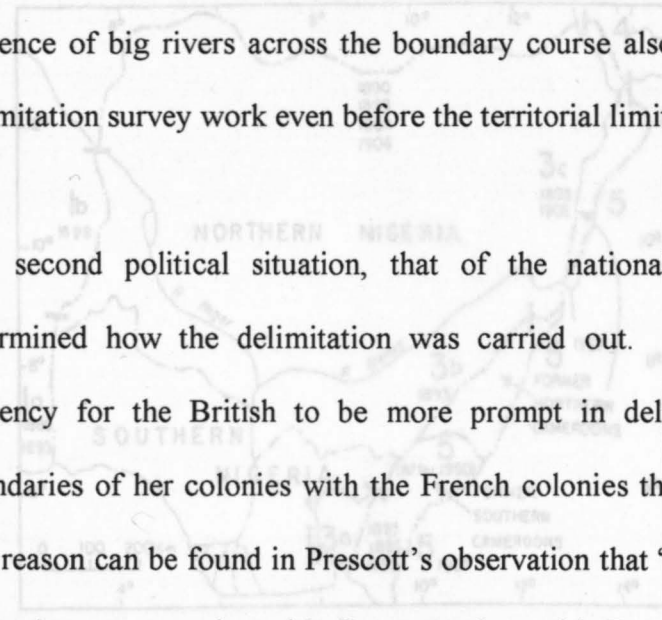
presence of big rivers across the boundary course also put a temporary stop to the

3. 5. The Scheme of Boundary Definition

The nature of political arrangements in and around Nigeria had a lot of bearing on the processes of the delimitation and of the demarcation of her boundaries. First, in the early period of colonial rule there were three separate colonies. By 1900, for example, these were three distinct entities: Colony, Southern Nigeria and Northern Nigeria (Asiwaju and Adeniyi, 1989, p. 186). These colonies were collaborating in some ways, as they were all British territories; but they were administered separately and the question of boundary delimitation, though initially settled by the Colonial Office and the Geographical Section (General Staff) was resolved individually. Secondly, Nigeria was surrounded by non-British colonies such as Cameroon (Germany), later French Cameroon, in the east: Niger (French) in the north, Chad (French) in the northeast, and Dahomey (French) in the west.

The first explains the way Nigeria's boundary delimitation was done by installments, as the boundary survey would terminate at the limit of a colony that arranged for the delimitation. For example, the Nigeria-Benin boundary, in spite of its relatively short length (692 kilometres) compared with the Nigeria-Niger boundary (1376 kilometres) was delimited in two sections. The sea to 9° N was around the northern limit of Southern Nigeria; the 9° N to the middle of the River Niger was in the sphere of influence of Northern Nigerian government. The middle of Niger forms a tripartite point for the boundaries of Nigeria, Niger, and the Republic of Benin. Other factors,

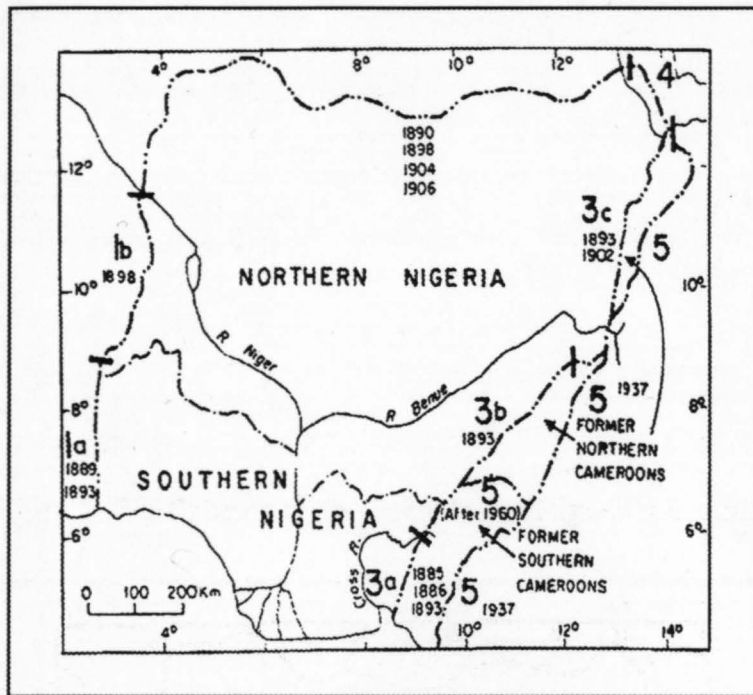
such as the length of the boundary, difficulty of terrain, exhaustion of supplies of the boundary commissions, disagreement over the course of the boundary and the presence of big rivers across the boundary course also put a temporary stop to the delimitation survey work even before the territorial limit of the colony was reached.



The second political situation, that of the nationalities of the commissioners, determined how the delimitation was carried out. For instance, there was the tendency for the British to be more prompt in delimiting and demarcating the boundaries of her colonies with the French colonies than with the German colonies. The reason can be found in Prescott's observation that "Britain always found it easier to reach a compromise with Germany than with France on issues relating to their colonies in Africa" (Prescott, 1971, p. 233). The sum of the political situation in and around Nigeria produced the boundary definition scheme illustrated in Figure 2. The figure shows the various sections of Nigeria's boundaries delimited by different commissions.

Figure 3 is the map of the area covered by Nigeria drawn in 1885. It shows no boundaries apart from the tribal frontiers. By 1900, all of Nigeria's boundaries had been defined by treaty as shown in Figure 4. By this time (1900), some of the boundaries had been delimited as in the case of Nigeria-Republic of Benin boundary (the coast to latitude 9° N in 1895-6 and latitude 9° N to the Niger, 1900), Nigeria-Cameroun boundary from Sea to Cross River (1895). The Nigeria-Republic of Benin boundary was marked on the ground. The difference between a boundary that was defined by a treaty and one that was delimited through boundary surveys can be seen in the nature of the boundary line. The former is made up of straight lines and a geometric curve while a delimited boundary line is usually irregular, having been made in conformity with the reality of the situation around the boundary. Most often,

Figure 2. The Scheme of the Definition of Nigeria's Boundaries



Source: J. Thompson. 1886. Niger and Central Sudan Sketches. *Scottish Geog. Magazine*, 2 [no volume] [no number], [no page].

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the boundaries were made to coincide with river courses and crests of ridges, all of which served as natural boundaries. They were also made to avoid, as much as possible, the division of settlements or separation of villages and their farmlands.

3.7 The Nigeria-Benin Boundary

Figure 3. Nigeria Without Boundaries in 1885



Source: J. Thompson. 1886. Niger and Central Sudan Sketches. *Scottish Geog. Magazine*, 2 [no volume] [no number], [no page].

As Nigeria has common borders with four countries, the development of Nigeria's boundaries is discussed in four sections. The first is the Nigeria-Benin (formerly

Dahomey) Boundary. The second is the Nigeria-Niger Boundary. The third is the Nigeria-Cameroun Boundary. The fourth is the Nigeria-Chad Boundary.

3. 7. The Nigeria-Benin Boundary

The Nigeria-Benin boundary was the earliest defined frontier. It was treated in two sections: (a) the coast to latitude 9° North, and (b) latitude 9° North to the Niger. In next section I will analyse the coast to latitude 9° North.

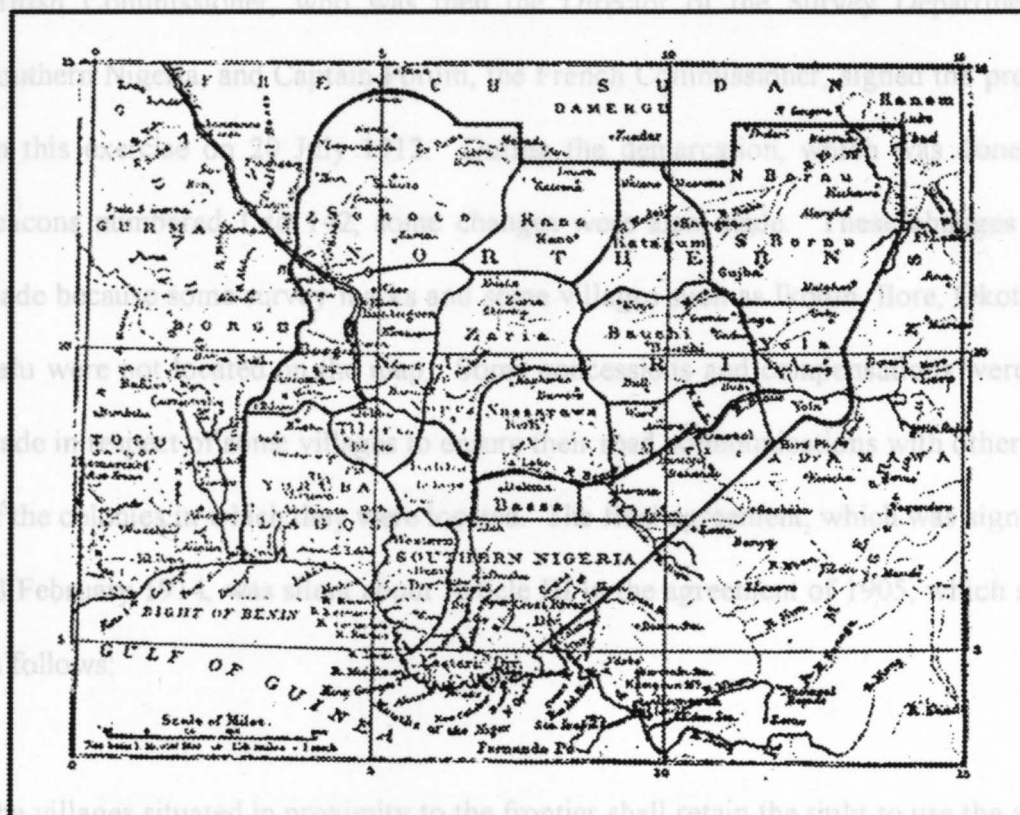
3. 7. 1. The Coast to Latitude 9° North

It was claimed that the section from the coast to latitude 9° North was first defined in a treaty signed on 18 August 1889 at which it was a straight line as shown in Figure 5. In the treaty, the line was described as follows:

On the Slave Coast, the line of demarcation between the spheres of influence of the powers shall be identified with the meridian, which intersects the territory of Porto Novo at the Ajarra Creek, leaving Pokrah or Pokea to the English Colony of Lagos. It shall follow the above-mentioned meridian as far as the 9° north latitude, where it shall stop (Hertslet, 1909, pp. 729-33).

Figure 6 shows the new frontier as part of the Nigeria-Benin boundary. The boundary delimitation was accepted at the Anglo-French Convention of 14 June 1898 and the agreement was signed on 19 October 1906.

Figure 4. Nigeria Boundaries by 1900



Source: Capt. C. H. Foulks. 1906. The New Anglo-French Frontier between the Niger and Lake Chad. *Scott. Geog. Mag.*, 22 [no number], [no page].

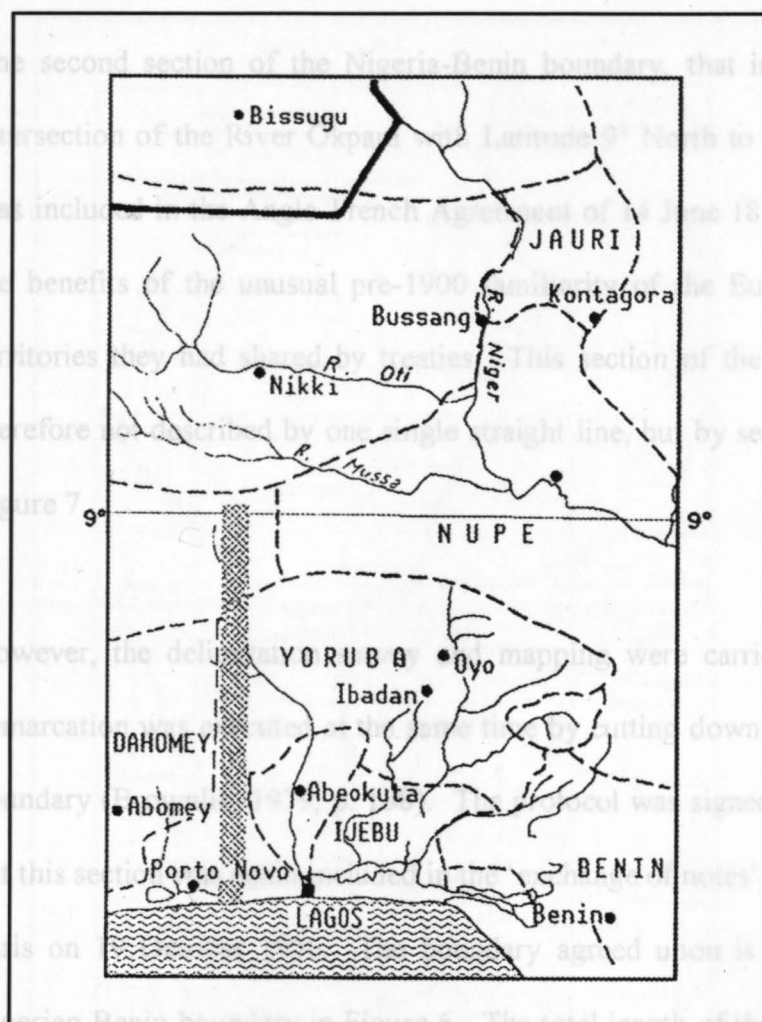
When the boundary was delimited in 1895-6 following an agreement signed in July 1893 on the conduct of the delimitation survey, it was found that the delimitation could not follow the stated straight course without shattering many villages and towns. Preference was given, instead, to the convenience of using various sections of rivers such as the Ajara, Amidu, Ibru, and largely, Okpara as a mutual boundary.

Figure 6 shows the new frontier as part of the Nigeria-Benin boundary. The boundary delimitation was accepted at the Anglo-French Convention of 14 June 1898 and the agreement was signed on 19 October 1906.

In 1912, an Anglo-French Commission was set up to demarcate the boundary and the British Commissioner, who was then the Director of the Survey Department of Southern Nigeria, and Captain Forum, the French Commissioner, signed the protocol on this exercise on 20 July 1912. During the demarcation, which was done with beacons numbered 1 to 142, some changes were also made. These changes were made because some survey marks and some villages such as Ikotun, Ilore, Okoto and Ijalu were not located on the map. Some concessions and compensations were also made in respect of some villages to ensure their road communications with other parts of the colonies in which they were located. The final agreement, which was signed on 18 February 1914, was silent about Article III in the agreement of 1905, which stated as follows:

The villages situated in proximity to the frontier shall retain the right to use the arable and pasture lands, springs and watering-places which they have heretofore used, even in the cases in which such arable and pasture lands springs and watering-places are situated within the territory of the other (HMS Office, 1906, p. 13). This type of agreement is not far from guaranteeing endless border disputes between two neighbours, as each party has the legitimate rights to the resources at their common border.

Figure 5. Nigeria-Benin Boundary from the coast to Lat. 9° N



Source: Capt. C. H. Foulks. 1906. The New Anglo-French Frontier between the Niger and Lake Chad. *Scott. Geog. Mag.*, 22 [no number], [no page].

(Abiodun, 1982, p. 3)

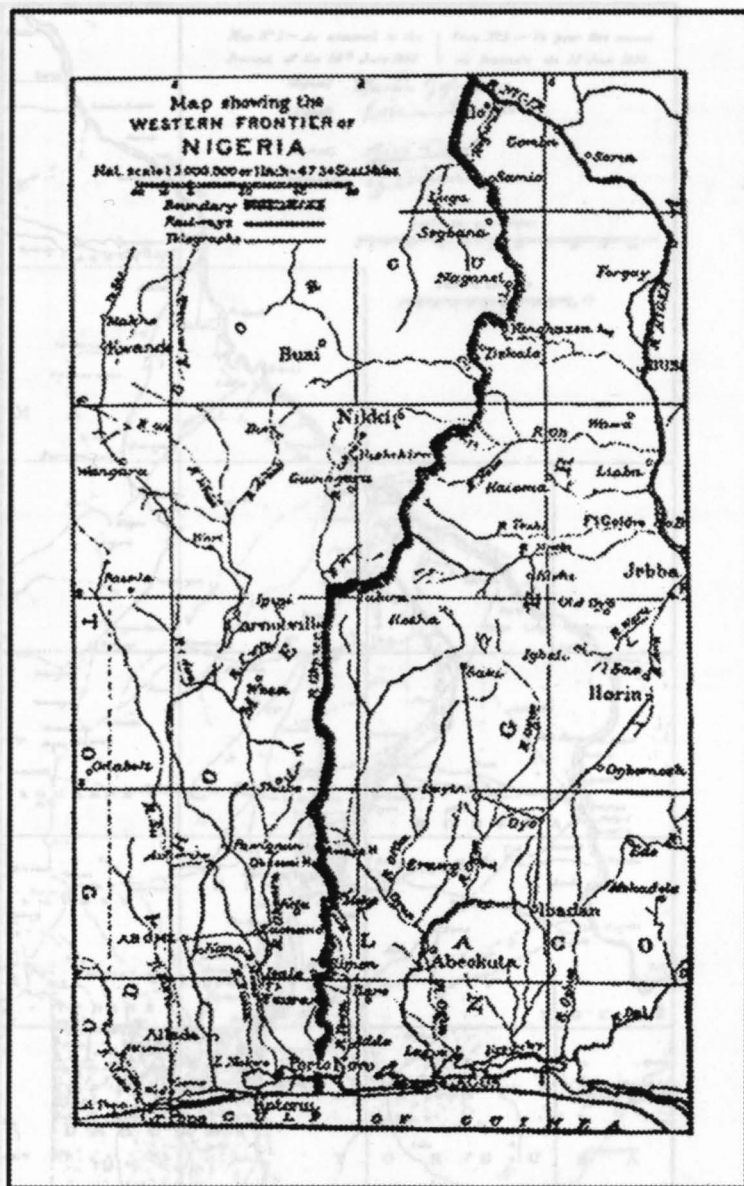
3. 7. 2. Latitude 9° North to the River Niger Delimitation Survey

The second section of the Nigeria-Benin boundary, that is, from the point of the intersection of the River Okpara with Latitude 9° North to the middle of the Niger, was included in the Anglo-French Agreement of 14 June 1898. The section enjoyed the benefits of the unusual pre-1900 familiarity of the European Powers with the territories they had shared by treaties. This section of the Nigerian boundary was therefore not described by one single straight line, but by series of lines as shown in Figure 7.

However, the delimitation survey and mapping were carried out in 1900 and the demarcation was executed at the same time by cutting down alternate trees along the boundary (Brownlie, 1979, p. 188). The protocol was signed on 22 December 1900, but this section was again included in the 'exchange of notes' and agreement signed in Paris on 19 October 1906. The boundary agreed upon is shown as a part of the Nigerian-Benin boundary in Figure 6. The total length of the boundary line between the Republic of Benin and Nigeria was about 696 kilometres (Hertslet, 1909, pp. 729-33), before final approval. The length as now apparent is fixed at 770 kilometres (Abiodun, 1982, p. 3).

Source: Thompson, J., 1886. Niger and Central Sudan Sketches. *Scottish Geog. Magazine*, 2 [no volume] [no number], [no page].

Figure 6. Nigeria-Benin Boundary after Delimitation Survey in 1898

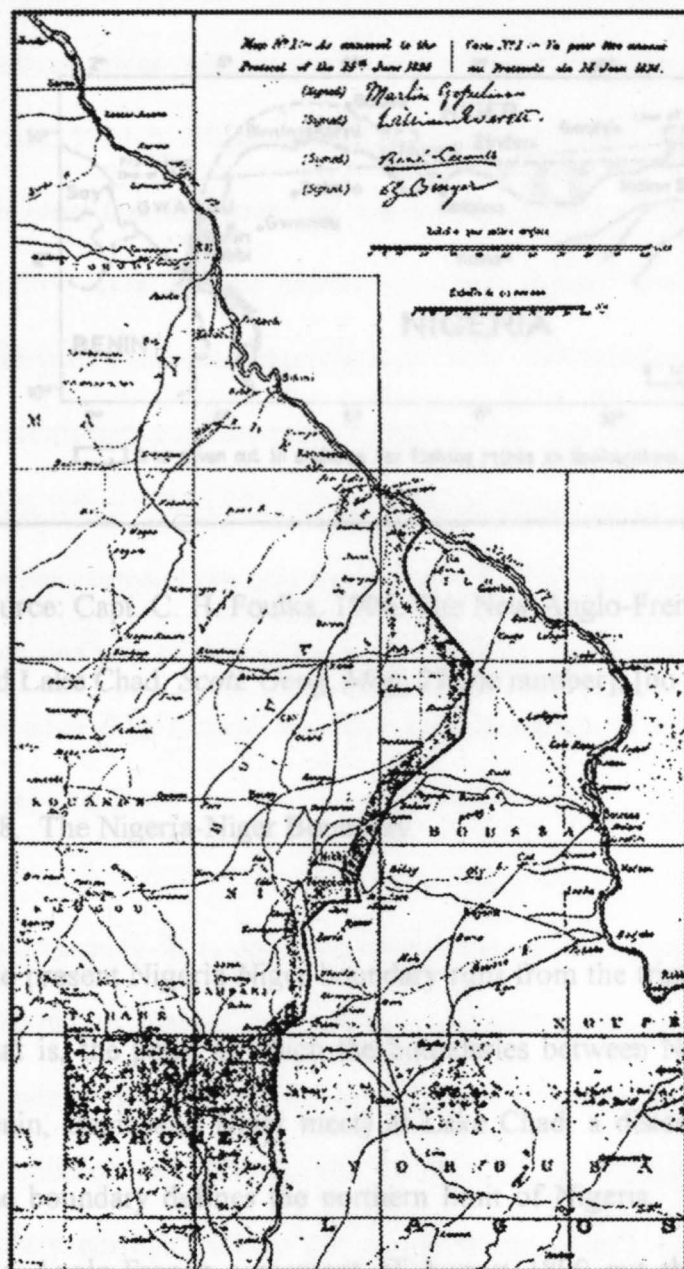


Source: Thompson, J., 1886. Niger and Central Sudan Sketches. *Scottish Geog.*

Magazine, 2 [no volume] [no number], [no page].

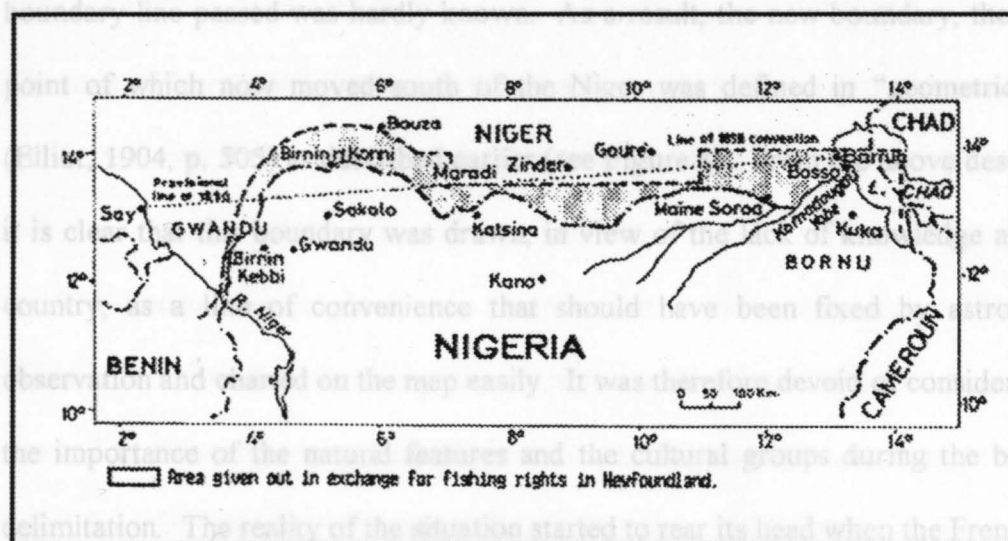
French Frontier between the Niger and Lake Chad. *Scott. Geog. Mag.* 22 [no number], [no page].

Figure 7. Nigeria-Benin boundary from Lat. 9° N to the Niger in 1898



Source: Capt. C. H. Foulks. 1906. The New Anglo-French Frontier between the Niger and Lake Chad. *Scott. Geog. Mag.*, 22 [no number], [no page].

Figure 8. Evolution of the Nigeria-Niger Boundary



Source: Capt. C. H. Foulks. 1906. The New Anglo-French Frontier between the Niger and Lake Chad. *Scott. Geog. Mag.*, 22 [no number], [no page].

3. 8. The Nigeria-Niger Boundary

The present Nigeria-Niger boundary runs from the tripartite point on the Niger River (that is, the point at which the boundaries between Nigeria and Niger, Nigeria and Benin, Benin and Niger meet) at Lake Chad, a distance of about 1490 kilometres. The boundary defines the northern limit of Nigeria. The map-based description in The Anglo-French agreement of August 1890 put the boundary as a straight-line running from the Bay on the Niger to Barrua on the western shore of Lake Chad (see Figure 8). A straight line is easy to draw on a map but a straight course is difficult to set out on the ground because of obstacles. However, that agreement merely denoted that the territory to the north belonged to France while that to the south belong to Britain. The boundary therefore assumed several interpretations in the hands of the British and French cartographers (Foulkes, 1906, p. 565). In June 1898, a second

convention was signed. Even at this time, the country through which the new boundary line passed was hardly known. As a result, the new boundary, the starting point of which now moved south of the Niger was defined in "geometric terms" (Elliot, 1904, p. 505) as described earlier (see Figure 8). From the above description, it is clear that this boundary was drawn, in view of the lack of knowledge about the country, as a line of convenience that should have been fixed by astronomical observation and charted on the map easily. It was therefore devoid of consideration of the importance of the natural features and the cultural groups during the boundary delimitation. The reality of the situation started to rear its head when the French West Africans crossed the boundary, for lack of more suitable routes and water, to move from one part of their territory to the other. In response to a protest letter written by Brigadier F.D. Lugard, the High Commissioner of northern Nigeria, Lt. Col. Peroz, wrote as follows:

Unfortunately, it is quite impossible for me to follow the advice which you tender referring to that of not holding or crossing the territories adjoining our mutual boundary. Perhaps you do not fully take into consideration that in such places as the delimitation of 1898 extends northwards, (to British advantage as far as all the country north of Sokoto and Bornu is concerned), such delimitation forces French territory back into a sterile country, where water is very scarce and where we cannot mark out to our own satisfaction a direction (lit road) which might suit us...I am convinced that the officers under your command do not have the same difficulties to face; thanks to the richness in provisions and water of the districts which fell to England's lot-None of these officers of yours will trouble themselves to dispute our right to this desert land where with difficulty we keep the few dams of stagnant water,

which, together, permits us to retain in one, the several slices of the French so-called "Niger-Chad" territories, from the attacks of the Tornadoes (PRO, CO. 39254. 1901). The tone of Peroz's letter indicates the type of animosity that existed between Britain and France over the boundaries of their colonies in Africa. *Karakara (Northern Nigeria, 1904, p. 7).*

In 1904, France was delighted to be compensated for her renunciation of her fishing rights in Newfoundland by being given a region south of the 1898 boundary line that ensured an all-season route from Niger to Chad. This arrangement brought the map-based boundary line further south. But, before then, the delimitation survey which was under the leadership of Lt. Col. Elliot (British) and Captain Moll (French) had already started with the 1898 line. The survey, though nullified and invalidated by Article VIII of the convention, which was signed on 8 April 1904, familiarised the British and the French with the political situation around the boundary. Both parties realised that the new line had cut through several districts, but the best they could do was to include a clause in the agreement that gave the people living near the boundary the freedom to cross the frontier in order to settle in any of the territories they might choose. There was a provision for the fixing of the boundary line by a joint commission "when the political divisions of the country was studied and the integrity of the lands belonging to the various tribes was respected" (Foulkes, 1906, p. 567). *The*

two teams met on the Niger in December 1904. The British Commissioner was Major

The realignment of the Nigeria-Niger boundary in 1904 did not go uncontested. For example, in a letter from the Resident of Sokoto Province, whose province was considerably reduced, to the Higher Commissioner of northern Nigeria, he stated:

It appears to me that the proposed cession of Damagaram is likely to be a serious blow to the Protectorate. It might be possible to offer an alternative tract of territory,

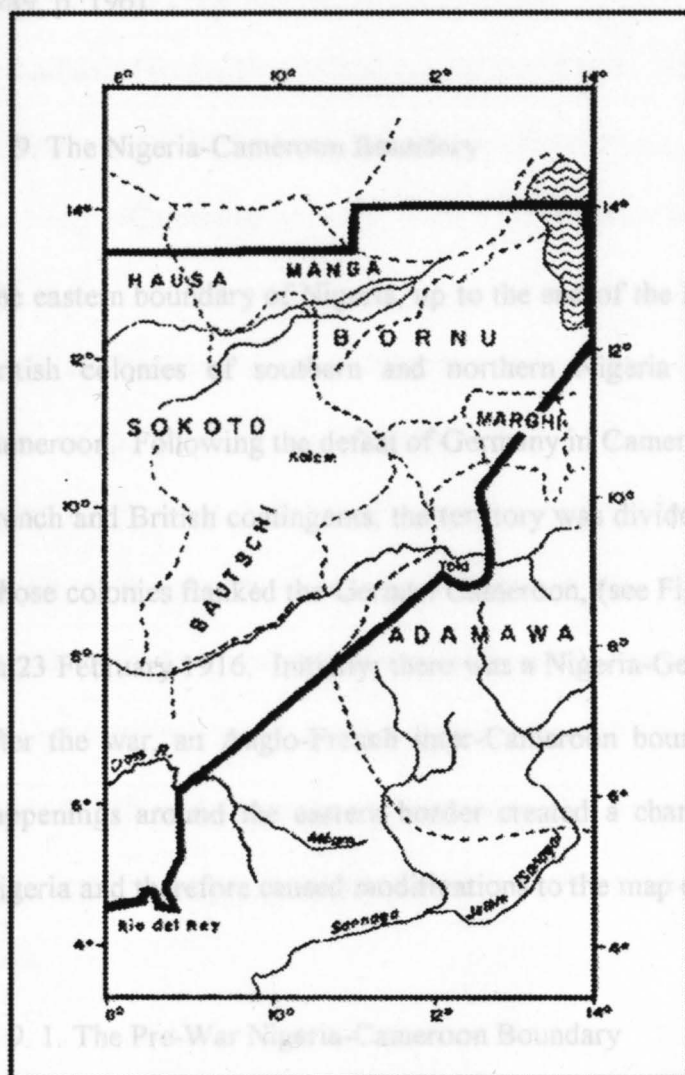
perhaps equally valuable to France, but of which the loss would be less serious to Northern Nigeria. The Beibei district, from Junju (French) or Unguan Iliasu (British) to Nassarawa (British) seems to offer a possibility. It is a populous, prosperous district, in close touch with French towns of Junju and Karakara (Northern Nigeria, 1904, p. 7).

On 2 May 1904, Lugard wrote as follows:

The large area of country ceded to French to the north of Sokoto gives them the district of Kiara, inhabited by the Asbenawa camel herds, and hence deprives us of the last remnant of hold over these valuable breeders of transport animals and stock.... It places upon me...the most difficult task of informing the Sultan of Sokoto, whose dominion I recently pledged the good faith of England to protect...that promise is broken, and that a very considerable portion of his territory is to be ceded to France. Since the boundary is completely changed, it will, in my opinion, be necessary to have a new Boundary Commission (Asiwaju and Adeniyi, 1989, p. 195).

Therefore, an Anglo-French Boundary Commission was set up later in the year. The two teams met on the Niger in December 1904. The British Commissioner was Major O'Shee of the Royal Engineers and Captain Tilho represented France. The two commissioners were experienced boundary surveyors, the former accomplished the demarcation of the Rhodesia-Mozambique boundary, and the latter was a member of the Commission that surveyed the former Niger to Chad boundary from 1902-1904.

Figure 9. Nigeria-Cameroon Boundary in 1893, Splitting Bornu, Adamawa and Marghi



Source: Capt. C. H. Foulkes. 1906. The New Anglo-French Frontier between the Niger and Lake Chad. *Scott. Geog. Mag*, 22 [no number], [no page].

One important aspect of the delimitation survey was the agreement that the new frontier should be fixed on the ground. By 1908, the Commission had completed work on the delimitation survey and the demarcation of the boundary. In all, one hundred and forty-eight beacons were established between 1906 and 1908. A description of the boundary was signed in Kano on 25 February 1908. The protocol

on this was signed after Exchange of Notes on 10 February 1910 while the final approval for the Nigeria's northern frontier was signed in 1911 (Asiwaju and Adeniyi, 1989, p. 196).

3. 9. The Nigeria-Cameroon Boundary

The eastern boundary of Nigeria, up to the end of the First World War, separated the British colonies of southern and northern Nigeria from the German colony of Cameroon. Following the defeat of Germany in Cameroon by the combined efforts of French and British contingents, the territory was divided between Britain and France, whose colonies flanked the German Cameroon, (see Figure 9) at a meeting in London on 23 February 1916. Initially, there was a Nigeria-German Cameroon boundary; but after the war, an Anglo-French inter-Cameroon boundary was created. All these happenings around the eastern border created a change to the territorial extent of Nigeria and therefore caused modifications to the map of Nigeria.

3. 9. 1. The Pre-War Nigeria-Cameroon Boundary

3. 9. 2. The Sea to Cross River Rapids

The Nigeria-Cameroon boundary, a length of about 1400 kilometres before the First World War, was delimited in three stages. The first was from the sea to Cross-River Rapids. The second was from Cross-River to Yola. The third was from Yola to Lake Chad. The first Anglo-German agreement in respect of this boundary was signed in 1885. However, the same 1885 agreement provided only a map-based description from a point between longitude $89^{\circ} 42'$ and $8^{\circ} 46'$ east at which 'Rio del Rey' entered the sea at the Cross River Rapids. This line was extended northeastwards to Yola by a

convention of July-August, 1886. In an agreement signed on 1 July 1890, a slight modification was made on the line from the coast to the Cross River, following the discovery that there was no river named 'Rio del Rey'. As a result, the starting point was adjusted to the head of the Rio del Rey Creek. Following the Berlin Convention of November 1893 between Britain and Germany, an agreement was signed defining the Nigeria-Cameroon boundary from Yola to Lake Chad.

3.9.3. The Cross-River to Yola Arc

In all, the boundary between Nigeria and Cameroon by 1893 had been defined to a point on the southern shore of Lake Chad, 35 minutes east of the meridian of the centre of the town in Kuka. The frontier was, but for the arc described from Yola, almost a straight line (see Figure 9). Again, the boundary line showed no consideration for physical features or the ethnic boundaries. The Kingdom of Borno was split into two parts. Similarly, Adamawa and Marghi were each divided between Great Britain and Germany. In this case, Yola appeared the only city given special consideration: hence, the arc was described with a radius of about 46 kilometres from Yola.

On 12 December 1902, an agreement was signed on the procedure for the delimitation

3.9.2. The Sea to Cross-River Rapids

During all these activities, Lt. Colonel Lewis Jackson was appointed the British Commissioner while his German counterpart was

The delimitation survey of the Anglo-German Nigeria-Cameroon boundary started in 1895 with the section between the sea and the Cross River Rapids. This survey conducted by Captain C. F. Close (British) and Lieut. Von Besser (German), was not conclusive and the final survey was not carried out until 1905 and demarcation until 1906. As can be observed, the delimitation of the Nigeria-Cameroon boundary was very slow. As a result, the Germans crossed the boundary frequently to take over

important towns in the British territories. In order not to allow the situation develop further, the West African Association of Liverpool had to implore the British Government to settle the delimitation of the boundary so as "to preserve the valuable lands which belong to southern Nigeria which were in danger of being absorbed by the German Colony of Cameroon" (PRO, CO. 39254. 1901).

3. 9. 3. The Cross-River to Yola Arc

The section from the Cross River to Yola Arc was a straight line on maps until after 1901. Again, the delimitation survey by the British and the Germans did not start until August 1907 and the demarcation until 1923. Following the completion of the delimitation survey in 1909, a protocol was signed on 16 April 1909. With respect to the demarcation, the protocol was signed in 1913.

3. 9. 4. The Yola Arc to Chad

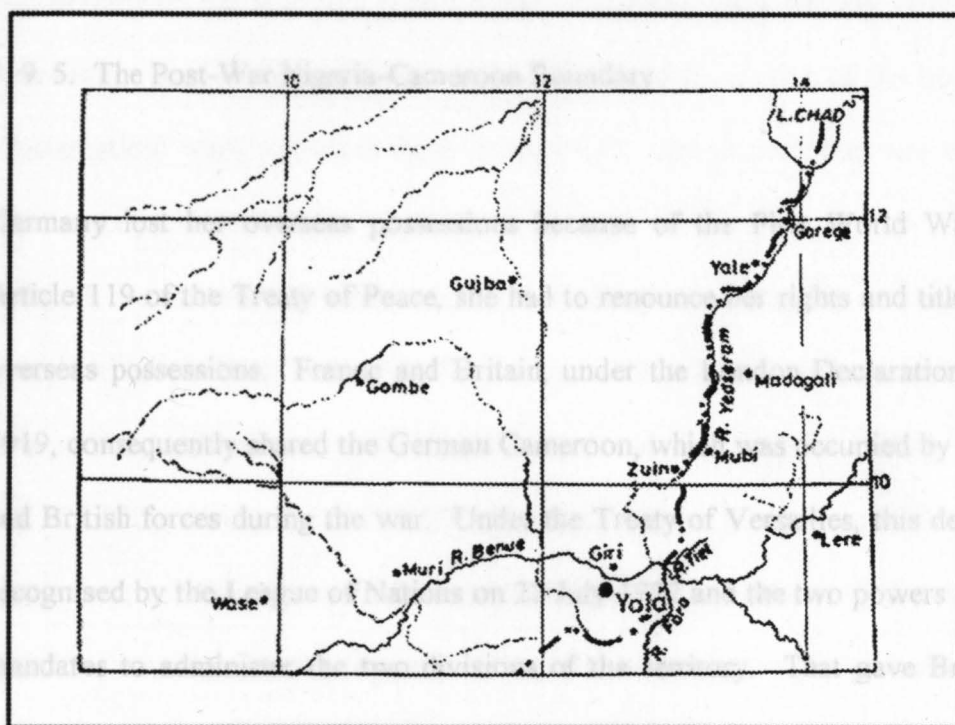
On 12 December 1902, an agreement was signed on the procedure for the delimitation of the section from Yola to Chad. During all these activities, Lt. Colonel Lewis Jackson was appointed the British Commissioner while his German counterpart was Captain Glauning. Some of the important measurements made by the Commission were the positions of Yola, which was fixed by compromise as latitude $9^{\circ} 12' 29.5''$ north and longitude $12^{\circ} 26' 54.3''$ east, and the Yola Arc measured to be 128 kilometres. Moving northward to Lake Chad, a discrepancy was settled regarding the shore of the Lake. Article VI of the agreement of 12 December 1902 made it clear that the high water mark would be considered as the shore of the Lake Chad.

However, according to Jackson's letter of 26th February 1904, to the Colonial Office (Africa, 1926, p. 1049) the Germans had attempted to use the low water marks, which, if accepted, should have resulted in Nigeria's loss of the towns of Dikwa, Uba and Bama. The best the commission could do in this case was to chart the boundary line along the Lake using the two water marks and return to Europe, as they did in May 1904, for the settlement.

To resolve these differences, another conference was fixed for March 1906 in London to settle the disagreement. At the end of the conference on 19 March 1906, an agreement was signed that delimited the boundary from Yola to Lake Chad at a point latitude $13^{\circ} 05' N$ and approximately longitude $14^{\circ} 05' E$. Demarcation followed in the same year and was completed in 1907, but the final approval of this boundary was not effected until 11 March 1913, just over a year before the First World War, which considerably modified the Nigeria-Cameroon boundary. It does not require close scrutiny to notice that the boundary delimited (Figure 10) deviated considerably from the straight line that existed before 1903 (Figure 8).

The survey brought the commissioners close to the reality of the cultural frontiers. The need for exchanges of villages arose in order to avoid the division of the settlements by the boundary lines and to make use of the natural boundary features. Although efforts were made to overcome the imperfections of the new boundary line, later developments proved that it was not to be the permanent frontier between Nigeria and Cameroon. Errors in fixing the positions of the places appearing on the late 19th century maps, such as the Perthe's German maps on which the boundary definition was initially based, placed some of the settlements under the wrong rulers.

Figure 10. Nigeria-Cameroon Boundary from Yola to Lake Chad after the Delimitation Survey



Source: Capt. C. H. Foulks. 1906. The New Anglo-French Frontier between the Niger and Lake Chad. *Scott. Geog. Mag*, 22 [no number], [no page].

The survey brought the commissioners close to the reality of the cultural frontiers. The need for exchanges of villages arose in order to avoid the division of the settlements by the boundary lines and to make use of the natural boundary features. Although effects were made to overcome the imperfections of the new boundary line, later developments proved that it was not to be the permanent frontier between Nigeria and Cameroon. Errors in fixing the positions of the places appearing on the late 19th century maps, such as the Perthe's German maps on which the boundary definition was initially based, placed some of the settlements under the wrong rulers.

attached to the agreement was on the smaller scale of 1:200,000. Article 2 of the

For example, Chikito was exchanged for Karua in order to use a natural boundary (River Faro). Northern Nigeria, 1904, p. 134). In 1930, the inter-Cameroon boundary

was defined on the map in a protocol that was signed on 9 January 1931. A proper

3. 9. 5. The Post-War Nigeria-Cameroon Boundary

(demarcation) were embarked upon in late 1937. The project, that was estimated to

Germany lost her overseas possessions because of the First World War. Under Article 119 of the Treaty of Peace, she had to renounce her rights and titles over her overseas possessions. France and Britain, under the London Declaration of 1 July 1919, consequently shared the German Cameroon, which was occupied by the French and British forces during the war. Under the Treaty of Versailles, this decision was recognised by the League of Nations on 22 July 1922 and the two powers were given mandates to administer the two divisions of the territory. That gave Britain more lands to the east of the Nigeria-Cameroon boundary, from the Coast to Chad except a section of the Yola Arc (see Figure 11). Under the treaty, the new British possessions were administered together with Nigeria and were also known as Northern Cameroon and Southern Cameroon. However, Northern Cameroon was separated at a segment of the Yola Arc. With effect from 26 June 1923, Southern Cameroon became a part of the Southern province of Nigeria while Northern Cameroon was a part of the Northern province of Nigeria.

The new possessions of France and Britain introduced a new frontier between the French sphere of influence and the British territory. The line agreed upon in July 1919 was delimited under the Treaty of Versailles in July 1922. The initial map-based description was done on a 1:300,000 Moisel map of Cameroon but the map attached to the agreement was on the smaller scale of 1:200,000. Article 2 of the

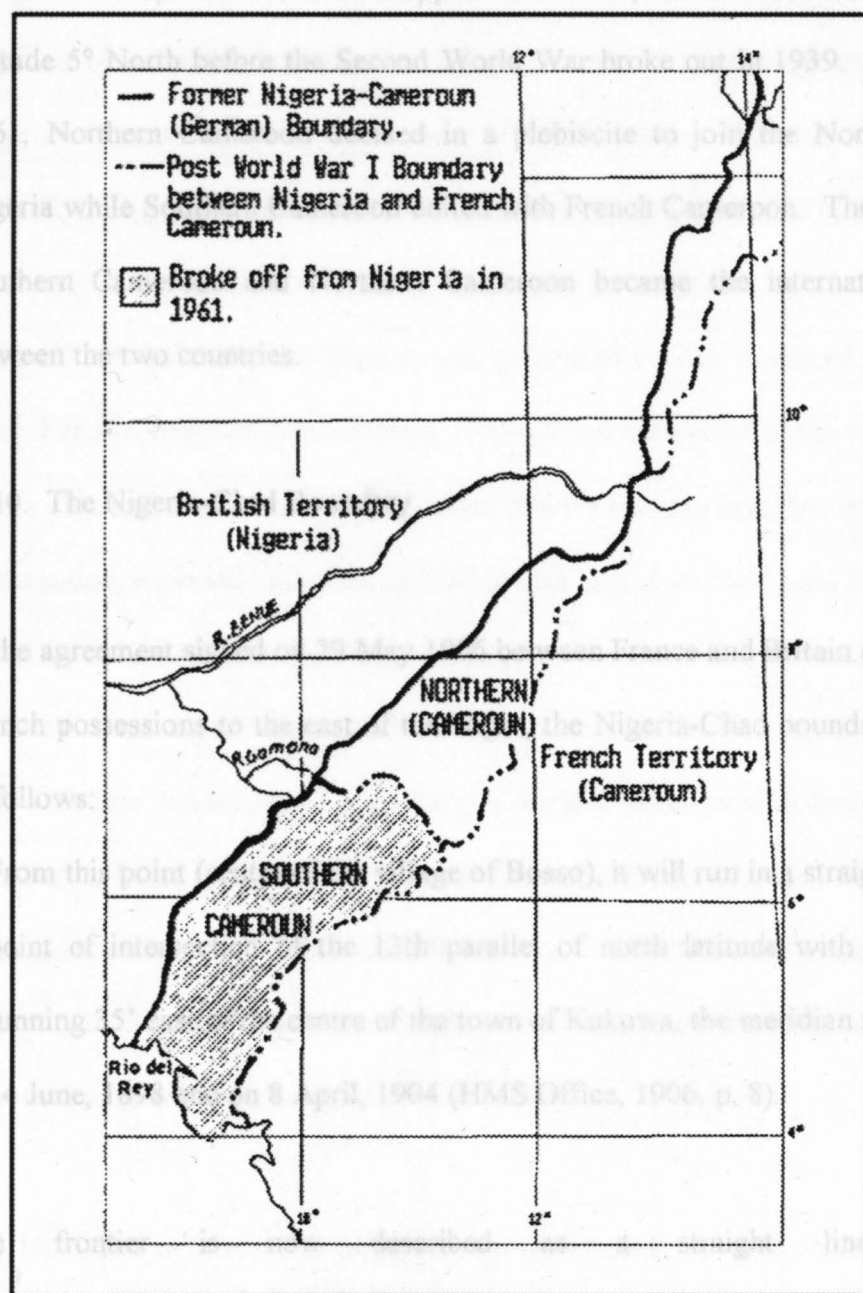
1919 Treaty emphasised the need to "lay down the frontier in accordance with natural features" (Northern Nigeria, 1904, p. 154). In 1930, the inter-Cameroon boundary was defined on the map in a protocol that was signed on 9 January 1931. A proper delimitation survey, mapping and an on-the-ground translation of the boundary line (demarcation) were embarked upon in late 1937. The project, that was estimated to last for six years, involved:

- (a) A framework of astro-radio points along the boundary at intervals of approximately thirty miles;
 - (b) Preparation of topographical maps enhancing a strip 5-6.5 kilometres wide on either side of the boundary on a scale of 1:125,000, increased to 1:62,500 in special cases where more details were required;
 - (c) Demarcation of actual boundary line by pillars. The line was to follow natural features as far as possible, and monuments to be placed where the line meets or departs from them (on straight lines, monuments were to be placed at angles only);
 - (d) A line of instrumental levels to be run near the boundary, and to be tied to every station;
 - (e) Printing of map on a final scale of 1:100,000
- (Nigeria Survey Department, 1937).

Source: Capt. C. H. Foulke, 1906, *The New Anglo-French Frontier between the Niger and Lake Chad*.

The Boundary Commission started work in November 1937 with a plan for the British party under the leadership of P. C. Allen, to carry out b, d, e above and half of the pillar installation in c while the French party was to undertake the pillar installation of

Figure 11. The Sharing of German Cameroon between Britain and France



Source: Capt. C. H. Foulks. 1906. The New Anglo-French Frontier between the Niger and Lake Chad.

The Boundary Commission started work in November 1937 with a plan for the British party under the leadership of J.G.C. Allen, to carry out b, d, e above and half of the pillar installation in c while the French party was to undertake the pillar installation of

the rest. By the end of that year, about two hundred kilometres of the 1600 kilometres of the boundary line had been mapped. However, the exercise did not go beyond latitude 5° North before the Second World War broke out in 1939. On 11 February 1961, Northern Cameroon decided in a plebiscite to join the Northern region of Nigeria while Southern Cameroon united with French Cameroon. The line separating Southern Cameroon and Northern Cameroon became the international boundary between the two countries.

3.10. The Nigeria-Chad Boundary

In the agreement signed on 29 May 1906 between France and Britain over British and French possessions to the east of the Niger, the Nigeria-Chad boundary was defined as follows:

From this point (centre of the village of Bosso), it will run in a straight line to the point of intersection of the 13th parallel of north latitude with the meridian running 35' east of the centre of the town of Kukuwa, the meridian mentioned on 14 June, 1898 and on 8 April, 1904 (HMS Office, 1906, p. 8).

The frontier is now described as a straight line from the Nigeria/Niger/Chad/Cameroon tripartite point (latitude 13° 42' 29" north and longitude 13° 38' east) the Nigeria/Chad/Cameroon tripartite point (latitude 13° 05' north and longitude 14 05' east).

General Gowon's alleged action at Maroua in 1971 and 1975 of giving away several square kilometres of Nigeria's territory to Cameroon (Ajomo, 1982, p. 138) shows that Nigeria did not, in the past, take the issue of the boundary delimitation very seriously.

3. 11. Conclusion of the Definition of Nigerian Boundaries

One can observe the intensive cartographic work in relation to the delineation of Nigeria's boundaries in the early years of colonial rule. The efforts were gradually reduced, though not because all the boundaries initially allocated had been surveyed, accurately mapped and demarcated. This can be explained by the fact that in the years of colonial rule, enthusiasm was generated by the imagined and anticipated natural endowments of the territories. Gains from most parts of the territories did not justify this enthusiasm and the European powers became less interested in boundary demarcation, especially after the Second World War, than they were initially. Even to the independent African nations, the boundary demarcation and maintenance are not regarded as an urgent matter until some economic activities start to take place near their common boundary or a military incursion is reported around their common boundary. Most villages near Nigeria's boundaries did not feel the impact of the Nigerian government. The people living around the boundaries may sometimes be closer to their brothers and sisters who were cut off on the other sides than to the nationals of their own country.

The incidence of clashes experienced along the northern part of the Nigeria-Benin boundary in April 1981, around the Nigeria-Cameroon border in 1982 and the Nigeria-Chad boundary in 1983 revived interest in the boundary issues between Nigeria and her close neighbours. General Gowon's alleged action at Maroua in 1971 and 1975 of giving away several square kilometres of Nigeria's territory to Cameroon (Ajomo, 1982, p. 138) shows that Nigeria did not, in the past, take the issue of the boundary delimitation very seriously.

Figure 12. Scheme of the Definition of Nigerian Boundaries

Initial Treaties	Delimitation Surveys	Marking on Ground	Protocol Signed	Final Approval
1. Nigeria-Benin Republic (Anglo-French)				
a. The coast to Lat. 9°N – 320 km				
Aug. 10, 1889	1895-96	1895-96 trees	Oct. 12, 1896	Oct. 19, 1906
July 12, 1893		Blazed-cairns	June, 14 1898	
1	1900	-	Jan. 20, 1900	
2	-	1912	July 20, 1912	Mar. 11, 1913
b. Lat. 9°N to Niger--376 km				
		1900 trees blazed & some cairns	Dec. 22, 1900	
& Jan. 1905				
June 3, 14, 1898	1900			Oct. 19, 1906
2. Nigeria-Niger-1490km				
Aug. 1890	Nov. 1902	-	Apr. 9, 1906	
June 14, 1898	Jan. 1904		May 29, 1906	
Apr. 8, 1904				
May 29, 1906	1906, 1907		Feb. 25, 1908 & Feb. 19 1901	May 17, 1911 & July 1, 1911
3. Nigeria-Chad (Anglo-French)—75km		1906		
4 1898, 1904, & 1906 with Nigeria-Niger	-	-		

marking on the ground was carried out in 1895 and 1896. The protocol of the treaty was signed on 12 October 1896 and it was finally approved on 19 October 1906.

4.Nigeria-Cameroon (Anglo-Germany)				
a. Sea to Cross River rapids—224km				
29 Apr. /May 7, July 1885,	1895, 1905 May 1905	Dec. 1906	1906	Mar. 11, 1913
Aug. 27/				
2, 1886 July 1, 1890 & April 14, & Nov. 15, 1893				
b. Cross River-Yola Arc rapids—224km				
Nov. 5, 1893,	Aug. 15, 1909	May 7, 1912 & 1913	Apr. 16, 1909	Mar. 11, 1913
c. Yola Arc-Lake Chad—560km				
Nov. 15, 1893	Aug 10, 1903	1906-1907	Feb. 12, 1907	
Dec. 2, 1902	Feb. 3, 4, 4, & 5	Mar. 11, 1907	Mar. 5, 1909	
5.Nigeria-Cameroon (Anglo-French)—1680km				
Feb. 6 23, 1916	1928		Jan. 9, 1931	-
July 10, 1919	1937-39			
July 22, 1922	Not completed			

Source: Asiwaju A. I. and Adeniyi P. O., 1989. *Borders in Africa: A Multi-Disciplinary and Comparative Focus on Nigeria and West Africa*, ed. Nigeria: University of Lagos Press.

Figure 1 presents a summary of the progress of the boundary definition in Nigeria.

Nigeria and Benin Republic (Anglo-French)-320 kilometres took place on the coast latitude 9° N, on 10 August 1889. The delimitation survey of the border and its marking on the ground was carried out in 1895 and 1896. The protocol of the treaty was signed on 12 October 1896 and it was finally approved on 19 October 1906.

On 12 July 1893, an Anglo-French treaty was convened and there was no delimitation survey of the border. However, the marking of the border on ground took place in 1895 and 1896. According to Figure 1 the protocol of this treaty was signed on 14 January 1898 and the delimitation survey of the border was carried out on the coast to latitude 9° N, in 1900. There was no marking of the border on ground but its protocol was signed on 20 January 1900. In 1912, the marking on ground on the coast to latitude 9° N took place and its protocol was signed on 20 July 1912.

As Figure 1 shows, the treaty between the two powers over the Nigeria and Niger border (1490 kilometres) took place in August 1890. The delimitation survey of the border was in November 1902, but there was no marking of the border on the ground and the final approval of the treaty was not made. Figure 1 indicates that the protocol of this treaty was signed on 9 April 1906. Again, on 14 June 1898, another treaty was convened between the two powers. In January 1904, the delimitation survey of the border was carried out, but there was no marking of the border on the ground and the final approval of the treaty was not made. On 8 April 1904, another treaty between the powers was convened. The delimitation survey of the border was made and marking of the border on the ground was carried out, but the protocol of this treaty was not signed and its final approval was not made. On 29 May 1906 there was a treaty between the two powers and a delimitation survey of the border was carried out in 1906 and 1907. During those activities, the marking of the border on the ground was not carried out, yet its protocol was signed on 19 February 1901 and 25 February 1908. As shown in Figure 1 the final approval of the treaty was on 17 May 1911 and 1 June 1911.

The Nigeria and Chad (Anglo-French) (75 kilometres) treaty was convened in 1898, 1904 and 1906. A look at Figure 1 indicates that there was no delimitation survey of the border; no marking of the border on the ground; no final approval of the treaty and its protocol was not signed. Nigeria and Cameroon (Anglo-German)-224 kilometres. According to Figure 1 this treaty took place concerning the Sea to the Cross River rapids section, on 29 April and 7 May 1895. The delimitation survey of the border was carried out in December 1905 and the marking of the border on the ground took place in 1906. Its protocol was signed in the same year and the final approval of the treaty was made on 11 March 1913. There was a follow up treaty on 27 July and August 1885 and the delimitation survey of the border was carried out in May 1905. As Figure 1 shows, there was no marking of the border on the ground, its protocol was not signed and the final approval of the treaty was not made. As Figure 1 indicates, several treaties also took place between the powers concerning the sea to the Cross River rapids section. The first treaty was convened on 1 and 2 July 1886, the second was on 14 April 1890 and the third was on 15 November 1893. As can be seen in Figure 1, the delimitation survey of the border was not carried out; there were no marking of the border on the ground; the protocol was not signed and there was no final approval of the treaty. On 22 July 1922, there was a treaty between the two powers, but the delimitation survey of the border was not carried out. With respect to the Cross River-Yola Arc (224 kilometres) there was a treaty between the two powers on 15 November 1893 and the delimitation survey of the border took place on 7 May and in August 1909. On 16 April 1909, the protocol of the treaty was signed. On 11 March 1913, the final approval of the treaty was made and the marking of the border on the ground also took place in 1912 and 1913. The protocol

As Figure 1 has shown, the Yola Arc-Lake Chad (456 kilometres) treaty took place on 15 November 1893, the delimitation survey of the border took place on 10 August 1903, and the marking of the border on the ground was in 1906 and 1907. According to Figure 1 the protocol was signed on 12 February 1907 but there was no final approval of the treaty. On 2 December 1902, there was a treaty between the two powers. On 3, 4 and 5 February 1907, the delimitation survey of the border was carried out. On 11 March 1907, the marking of the border on the ground took place and its protocol was signed on 5 March 1909, but the final approval of the treaty was not made.

The section of the Nigeria-Benin boundary running from latitude 9° north to the

As indicated in Figure 1 the Nigeria-Cameroon (Anglo-French) treaty regarding the border of 1680 kilometres took place on 23 February 1916. The delimitation survey of the border also took place in 1928, but there was no marking of the border on the ground. The final approval of the treaty was not made, but the treaty was also signed on 9 January 1913. On 10 July 1919, another treaty was convened between the two powers and the delimitation survey of the border took place in 1937 and 1939. As shown in Figure 1 there was no marking of the border on the ground, the protocol was not signed and there was no final approval of the treaty. On 22 July 1922, there was a treaty between the two powers, but the delimitation survey of the border was not completed, perhaps because of the departure of the colonial powers.

present should be carried out and all the textual descriptions in such agreements

As shown in Figure 1, on 14 June 1898, there was a treaty on latitude 9° N regarding the boundary of 376 kilometres. The delimitation survey of the border took place in 1900 and the marking on the ground of the border was in the same year. The protocol

demarcation. The whole process and its present lack of closure was bound to create

of this treaty was signed on 22 December 1900 and in January 1905. On 19 October 1906, the treaty was finally approved.

The data in Figure 1 indicate that Nigeria's eastern boundary, comprising the Nigeria/Cameroon and Nigeria/Chad borders, suffered the greatest neglect in respect of marking on the ground. The transition from a provincial boundary to an international boundary required another survey, and that to be supervised by Nigeria and her close neighbours.

The section of the Nigeria-Benin boundary running from latitude 9° north to the middle of the Niger was not properly demarcated. The alternate cutting of trees along the boundary is not a permanent measure because there was no special attention given to its delimitation and demarcation. As can be seen in Figure 1 the various agreements signed by Great Britain and France on the various sections of the Nigeria's boundaries can confirm this. It is difficult to translate a line on a map onto the ground. Therefore, without a proper demarcation with physical and visible materials, even the people living around the boundary may not be aware of its existence.

A detailed study of all agreements in respect of all boundaries, the past and the present should be carried out and all the textual descriptions in such agreements should be translated on topographical maps. The delimitation survey records should be checked properly with a view to reconciling survey tracts with the various demarcations. The sections that have not been demarcated should be surveyed for demarcation. The whole process and its present lack of closure was bound to create

problems for the future between people living in the border. Not surprisingly, therefore, the matter has become, a matter of concern for foreign policy. Whether this particular issue has been addressed in accord with Nigeria's foreign policy principles will be explained in chapter 5. But first, in chapter 4, border disputes need to be defined. Whatever measures were taken the definition of Nigeria's boundaries has caused border disputes between Nigeria and her close neighbours. The issues have not only attracted the attention of the international community, but have also developed problems over who owns what, such as a portion of land. With these developments, greater effort is required in theoretical and empirical analysis of territorial disputes.

Scholars often examine territorial disputes from the legal perspective and document how well-grounded the positions of contending governments are in international law. Yet, in many cases, agreement cannot be reached between the opposing states to submit their dispute to arbitration or a ruling before the International Court of Justice (Amin, 1981, pp. 98-106, 124-9, 131-8, Browne, 1979, pp. 26-43, 99-109, 133-40, 617-39). Whether governments will respect decisions based on international law ultimately depends on non-legal considerations, such as the country's relative military power or the strategic and economic value of the territory in dispute.

A border dispute involves either a disagreement between states over where their common homeland or colonial borders should be fixed, or, more fundamentally, the dispute entails one country contesting the right of another country even to exercise sovereignty over some or all of its homeland or colonial territory. At least one government does not accept the definition of where the boundary line of its border with another country is currently located, whereas the neighbouring government takes

Chapter 4: Border Disputes between Nigeria and her close Neighbours

Having outlined the principles that have guided Nigeria's overall foreign policy, this chapter turns the specific policy towards border disputes. The chapter begins by considering a definition of the concept of a territorial dispute between states before going on to identify and analyse the disputes that Nigeria has been involved in between 1960 and 2003.

4. 1. The Definition of Border Disputes

Scholars often examine territorial disputes from the legal perspective and document how, well-grounded the positions of contending governments are in international law. Yet, in many cases, agreement cannot be reached between the opposing states to submit their dispute to arbitration or a ruling before the International Court of Justice (Amin, 1981, pp. 98-106, 124-9, 131-8; Brownlie, 1979, pp. 26-43, 99-109, 133-40, 617-39). Whether governments will respect decisions based on international law ultimately depends on non-legal consideration, such as the country's relative military power or the strategic and economic value of the territory in dispute.

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the position that the existing boundary line is the legal border between the two countries based on a previously signed treaty or document. The scope of disagreement over the boundary line can range from a small section of territory to the entire length of the border. In all of these disputes the challenger does not question the existence of a border with the challenged, but only the legitimacy of where the existing boundary line has been drawn, as for example Tanzania-Uganda; Ethiopia-Somalia; Moroccan-Algerian; Ethiopia-Eritrea dispute.

The somewhat haphazard manner in which Nigeria's borders were created by the

Many governments have disputed their common border due to unclear and contradictory treaties previously concluded (Albaharna, 1975, pp. 196-238, 261-3; Kelly, 1980, pp. 98-106, 124-9, 131-8). Once again, one country may occupy the national territory of her close neighbour and refuses to relinquish control over it. A government may or not openly and clearly issue its own claims to that portion of territory but, instead, may support separatist groups who claim that the disputed territory should form the basis of an independent and sovereign state.

In this category of cases, the directly opposed territorial interests of the challenger and challenged are very clear as the challenger seeks to annex her neighbour's territory and rejects any sovereign rights of the rival. In this regard, long-standing disputes over territory arise when there is no treaty or a set of historical documents clearly establishing a boundary line or where the delimitation of a border in a previous agreement is imprecise. In other cases, there is no past agreement serving as the common reference point for establishing where the boundary is located; instead, both challenger and challenged draw on their own set of historical evidence and documentation as to where they hold that the border should be. Indeed the legitimacy

of the border may even extend to one country questioning the very existence of another country. These border disputes, with their militarised confrontations and outcomes constitute my primary database of testing the causes of the border disputes between Nigeria and her close neighbours.

4. 2. The Border Disputes between Nigeria and her close Neighbours

The somewhat haphazard manner in which Nigeria's borders were created by the colonial powers and had been accepted unwillingly by the leaders since 1960 have been demonstrated in chapter 3. It left a legacy that was susceptible to contest. Not surprisingly, therefore, the border disputes between Nigeria and her neighbours are still a matter of daily occurrence. This chapter will analyse those disputes on a country-by country. Figure 12 provides a complete list of the the border disputes for the 43 years period 1960-2003. It thus covers the entire preiod from independence to the present.

1966	Nigeria vs Benin	Political	Diplomacy
1969	Nigeria vs Benin	Political	Threat of Force
1981-90	Nigeria vs Benin	Political	Diplomacy
1971-93	Nigeria vs Cameroon	Territorial	Threat of force
1994-96	Nigeria vs Cameroon	Territorial	Defensive use of force
2002	Nigeria vs Cameroon	Territorial	Diplomacy
1976	Nigeria vs Chad	Territorial	Defensive use of force
1980	Nigeria vs Chad	Territorial	Diplomacy
1984	Nigeria vs Chad	Political	Defensive use of force
1975	Nigeria vs Eq. Guinea	Political	Threat of Force
1977	Nigeria vs Niger	Territorial	Threat of Force
1989	Nigeria vs Niger	Political	Defensive use of force
1998	Nigeria vs Niger	Political	Defensive use of force

Figure 13. Border Disputes between Nigeria and her close Neighbours, 1960-2003

Year	Case	Reason for Dispute	Mode of Resolution
1966	Nigeria vs Benin	Political	Diplomacy
1969	Nigeria vs Benin	Political	Threat of Force
1976	Nigeria vs Benin	Political	Threat of Force
1981-90	Nigeria vs Benin	Political	Diplomacy
2003	Nigeria vs Benin	Political	Diplomacy
1965	Nigeria vs Cameroon	Territorial	Diplomacy
1971-74	Nigeria vs Cameroon	Territorial	Threat of Force & Diplomacy
1975	Nigeria vs Cameroon	Territorial	Threat of Force
1981	Nigeria vs Cameroon	Territorial	Diplomacy & defensive use of force
1987-93	Nigeria vs Cameroon	Territorial	Threat of force
1994-96	Nigeria vs Cameroon	Territorial	Defensive use of force
2002	Nigeria vs Cameroon	Territorial	Diplomacy
1976	Nigeria vs Chad	Territorial	Defensive use of force
1983	Nigeria vs Chad	Territorial	Diplomacy
1984	Nigeria vs Chad	Political	Defensive use of force
1975	Nigeria vs Eq. Guinea	Political	Threat of Force
1977	Nigeria vs Niger	Territorial	Threat of Force
1989	Nigeria vs Niger	Political	Defensive use of force
1998	Nigeria vs Niger	Political	Defensive use of force

4. 3. An Analysis of the Border Disputes

This thesis is concerned to establish the relationship between regime type and the way border disputes are handled. Twelve regimes have held power in Nigeria since independence in 1960. The heads of state are shown below in Figure 13. For the purposes of this thesis the regimes have been categorised by their overall conduct and values as either liberal democratic or autocratic. These are generalised categories and, as we shall see, there are at times inconsistencies between the overall values of a regime and its specific conduct. This reflects the inevitable fact that regimes are faced with differing domestic and international pressures and unexpected opportunities that make total consistency unlikely. Further, no head of state is ever totally consistent with his (there have been no female heads of state in Nigeria) own values any more than any other individual. The best of democrats have an eye to maintaining electoral support even if it means compromising their values and even generals can weigh the cost of war in terms of lives lost as too great, despite the potential military gains. Nevertheless there are two clear-cut patterns to the Nigerian regimes. If nothing else, the way they came to power is symptomatic of their values. Some seized or maintained power by force, some were elected. There is also the difference in their backgrounds. The military nature of all the autocratic regimes of Nigeria explains their readiness to use force to resolve conflicts, as opposed to those with a civilian background.

Within this chapter I define liberal democratic regimes as those that hold to elected civilian rule and accountability of their actions to the electorate. Competition and contest is institutionalised and managed through elections, the rule of law,

negotiations, compromises, and acceptance of majority rule. As regards foreign policy liberal democracy means the espousal of the value of negotiation and dialogue before military action is taken and then only on the grounds that it is done in self-defence and has the support of the nation and the international community. The democratic regimes policy of good neighbourliness emphasised peaceful co-existence and the primacy of diplomacy over coercive force. It does not of course rule out military action per se, but it makes it the action of last resort and only justifiable in very limited circumstances. The thesis predicts, therefore, that liberal democratic regimes will handle border disputes firstly by diplomacy, rather than by force or the threat of force. Force, if it is used, will only be with great reluctance and after all other means of resolution have been exhausted.

By autocratic regime, I mean a regime headed by an individual who exercises power in an absolute and arbitrary way; who owes no allegiance of the necessity to civilian rule nor any responsibility to give an account of their actions to the electorate. They in essence believe they have the right to do as they see fit whether that be acting in their own personal interests or in the interests of the nation as they see it. As regards foreign policy autocratic means the willingness to use all means to assert their will, regardless of the cost. This thesis predicts, therefore, that autocratic regimes will handle border disputes in a very different way to liberal democratic ones. Not that they eschew all diplomacy, for at times it can achieve national or personal goals, but they do not hold *on principle* that diplomacy must come first. On the contrary, their instinct will be to quickly resolve disputes by a display of force, unconcerned about what criticism this may attract from the public or international community. (1964, p.

88). In part, this is to reiterate the special importance of democratic values and

The two regime types have a very different attitude to war and conflict with other countries. According to the Kantian school, in a democratic state the general public opinion will oppose war due to the costs that the mass population would be compelled to bear, hence leaders who make decisions for war will be removed and replaced with more democratic individuals. Autocratic leaders, the Kantians reason, do not hold power on the basis of election and therefore are unconstrained in pursuing a violent foreign policy (Geller and Singer, 1998, p. 85). Those who argue in favour of democratic peace offer two explanations in support of their hypothesis. One explanation hinges on the political culture of the democratic state, that is, on its non-violent norms. The other explanation focuses on the democratic political structure, that is, decision-making constraints.

The first explanation offered by the normative school is that the decisions in a democratic policy are arrived at through consensus and compromise. The decision-makers who resolve their disputes through non-violent methods at home display a propensity to apply a similar methodology when dealing with conflicts with other democracies. This quality of peaceful resolution of conflicts makes the democratic leadership more peace-loving as compared to their counterparts in autocratic states. As a result of the common values which democracies share, they tend to resolve their disputes through non-violent means. A second justification, based on structural or institutional factors, posits that the pressure of various groups on the government imposes certain restrictions on a democratic government regarding engagement in war. According to Kant, an absolute ruler could plunge his country into war and expect to be largely insulated from its effects in his everyday life (Layne, 1964, p. 88). In part, this is to reiterate the special importance of democratic values and

behavioural commitments among the elite. But political strategy and skill are also crucial: when a democratic regime is under strain and incumbent leaders equivocate on critical issues or miscalculate the balance of forces, their actions may precipitate a democratic breakdown that was not inevitable.

Powell's cross-national analysis strikingly confirms this emphasis on elite choices and behaviour: indeed political violence is a product 'of the strategic efforts of small groups of political elites,' and 'reactions to violence by leaders of the major, contending parties are extremely important to the ability of democracy to survive violent shocks' (Powell, 1982, pp. 155-7). Where all major political parties and factions stand united against violence and terror, democracy survives; where political parties are divided in their view of violent actions and demands, especially where parties actively support or themselves organise political violence, the suspension or overthrow of the democratic regime is highly probable (Powell, 1982, pp. 157-170). Moreover, military intervention rarely occurs where the major political actors remain committed to the democratic process, and where it is attempted it fails. The breakdown of democracy (by either executive or military coup) is commonly preceded by 'renunciations of the democratic faith by its elected leaders' (Powell, 1982, pp. 155-7).

Given such an accumulation of theory and evidence, it is hardly surprising that so many empirical analyses have demonstrated a close association between the level of democratic development, and stable democratic government. What is problematic is not so much the extent to which democracy has been successful, but, rather, to what extent the explanations advanced for its failures are valid, and to what extent the

features of the development process that explain this democratic failure may in fact not be avoidable.

To return to the hypothesis concerning the behaviour of regimes towards border disputes being dependent on regime type, it now remains to test it against the empirical evidence. There follows an analysis of each of the 12 regimes (see Figure 5.1) and their response to the 18 border disputes that occurred within the period 1960-2003.

 Lib' Democratic Balewa (1960 - 1966)	 Autocratic Idris (1966)	 Autocratic Gowon (1966 - 1975)	 Autocratic Murtala (1975-1976)
 Autocratic Obasanjo (1976 - 1979)	 Lib' Democratic Shagari (1979 - 1983)	 Autocratic Babangida (1983 - 1985)	 Autocratic Abacha (1985 - 1993)
 Civilian Appointed Power Shonekan (1993)	 Autocratic Abacha (1993 - 1998)	 Autocratic Abacha (1998 - 1999)	 Lib' Democratic Obasanjo (1999 - 2003)

Crystal: The International News Magazine. 2000. Nigeria: The Cheers, The Sneers.

Crystal: The International News Magazine, 2 (18), 8

Figure 14. Nigeria's Liberal Democratic and Authoritarian Regimes 1960-2003

			
Lib' Democratic Balewa (1960 - 1966)	Autocratic Ironsi (1966)	Autocratic Gowon (1966 - 1975)	Autocratic Muhammed (1975-1976)
			
Autocratic Obasanjo (1976 - 1979)	Lib' Democratic Shagari (1979 - 1983)	Autocratic Buhari (1984 - 1985)	Autocratic Babangida (1985 - 1993)
			
Civilian Appointed Power Shonekan (1993)	Autocratic Abacha (1993 - 1998)	Autocratic Abubakar (1998 - 1999)	Lib' Democratic Obasanjo (1999 - 2003)

Crystal: The International News Magazine. 2000. Nigeria: The Cheers, The Sneers.

Crystal: The International News Magazine, 2 (18), 8.

4. 3. 1. The Balewa regime

Abubaka Tafawa Balewa was Nigeria's first elected parliamentary Prime Minister. By his election and overall policies and principles his regime can be called liberal democratic. How did he apply these principles to foreign policy and in particular to the border disputes of his time? Before the outbreak of the Nigerian civil war in 1967, the importance of border disputes was not recognised and considered by the foreign policy makers as a major factor in the determination of Nigeria's attitude towards her immediate neighbours in particular and other West African states in general. Their neglect of this seems to have arisen from an unwillingness to disturb the status quo with the associated risk of destabilising their neighbours. For instance, Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, recognised the artificiality of the colonial boundaries and insisted that the boundaries should be respected and recognised "until such a time as the peoples concerned decided on their own free will to change or to merge into one unit". As a democrat he believed that the use of force or undue pressure to bring about a change would constitute an interference in the domestic affairs of the neighbours which "could only result to political unrest for the future of this great continent" (Idang, 1973, p. 8, see pp. 118, 124, and 126-7).

The neglect of border disputes could also be said to have been the result of an insufficient appreciation of the significance and implications of border conflicts for Nigeria's relations with her close 'neighbours' especially when they were perceived to be militarily weaker than Nigeria. Put differently, had the Balewa government understood that all the West African countries, including Nigeria's immediate neighbours, have a common economic and security destiny, it might not have allowed

the fear of interference to override a common search for solutions to common problems. After all, there can be common efforts without interference if the efforts are predicted on mutual consultations. But this was not the case.

the overall plan for the future of the continent (Ade and Akintimirinwa, 1992, p. 244)

4. 3. 2. Balewa's policy towards Benin
component of the democratic policy of good
neighbourliness. He was following the 1964 Cairo resolution of the OAU Heads of

Several ethnic groups straddle the international borders between Nigeria and Benin. For instance, the Goun and the Yoruba in the South-east, and the Bariba and the Hausa in the North-east. The immediate post-independence era in the two countries saw the political leaderships exerting themselves to consolidate their hold on power. In early 1962, the two countries signed an agreement in Lagos, which established a common customs tariff between them and customs posts along their common border (Adedipe, 1976, p. 20). Outside their mutual diplomatic representation this was one of the very early attempts made to concretise official relations between the two countries.

common border. Balewa's response was to avoid confrontation and to seek to resolve

At about this time there were calls by this time from some elements in the Action Group Party of Nigeria for incorporation of the Yoruba-speaking areas of the Republic of Benin into Nigeria (Bach, 1978, pp. 81-92; Zartman, 1966, p. 115). Whatever the rational for the proposals, the fact is that they were not taken up seriously by the democratic regime. Balewa kept to the principle of *uti possidetis* or the sanctity of colonial frontiers mainly to avoid unnecessary conflicts with an African state. Rather than redrawing African boundaries along ethnic interests, he believed that colonial boundaries should be respected and, in the interest of peace, must remain the recognised boundaries until such a time the people concerned decide

on their own free will to change them or to merge into one unit. The Prime Minister also warned against any attempt to bring about such drastic changes by force or through undue pressure since such interferences could only result in unrest and harm the overall plan for the future of the continent (Ate and Akinterinwa, 1992, p. 244). The non-aggressive posture is a component of the democratic policy of good neighbourliness. He was following the 1964 Cairo resolution of the OAU Heads of States and Governments that protected the integrity of the post-independence international boundaries of African states, pleading that they be respected and that boundary revision can be undertaken only with the consent of the parties concerned.

4. 3. 3. Balewa's Policy towards Cameroon

In 1965 a border dispute escalated between Nigeria and Cameroon in the Bakassi Peninsula. The people of Danare in Ikom Division of Cross River State of Nigeria and Boudan in Mamfe Division of Cameroon clashed over a piece of land near their common border. Balewa's response was to avoid confrontation and to seek to resolve the dispute through bilateral negotiation, and other peaceful conflict management strategies.

On the initiative of his government, the first joint Commission of Nigeria and Cameroon met in 1965 at Mambe to discuss and reach an agreement in respect of the border between the two countries. This was followed by another meeting held at Ikon in the same year. The actual marking of the border on the land was in process, but, unfortunately, the progress of this Commission was interrupted by the crises in Nigeria in 1966 and so Balewa's government never arrived at a response.

Overall, therefore, it can be seen that the liberal democratic regime of Balewa's acted in its border disputes in a manner consistent with its principles. Though he regarded Africa's boundaries as artificial he nevertheless respected them and would not have them changed except by the consent of the people. Thus confronted with boundary problems his first choice was to use diplomacy rather than force, as we would predict.

date for return to civilian rule, in 1974, he postponed it and never showed any thing

4. 4. The Gen. Ironsi's Regime

Following the disputed parliamentary election in December 1964-January 1965 and the outbreak of violence in the Western region in November 1965, young military officers intervened on 15 January 1966 to 'restore order'. Balewa and the Premiers of the Western and Northern regions were assassinated, but the coup was not successful and in the ensuing chaos General Ironsi, the head of the army, stepped in and took control of the government. Ethnic riots and mutinies quickly took hold however until the situation was one of civil war.

As the civil war began the border issue with Cameroon was heightened around the coastal territory. Cameroon persistently protested that Nigerian troops had violated its territorial waters. How General Johnson Aguiyi Ironsi's autocratic regime would have handled this border dispute was never put to the test since his Government also was toppled, by General Yakubu Gowon, on 29 July 1966.

4. 5. Gen. Gowon's Regime

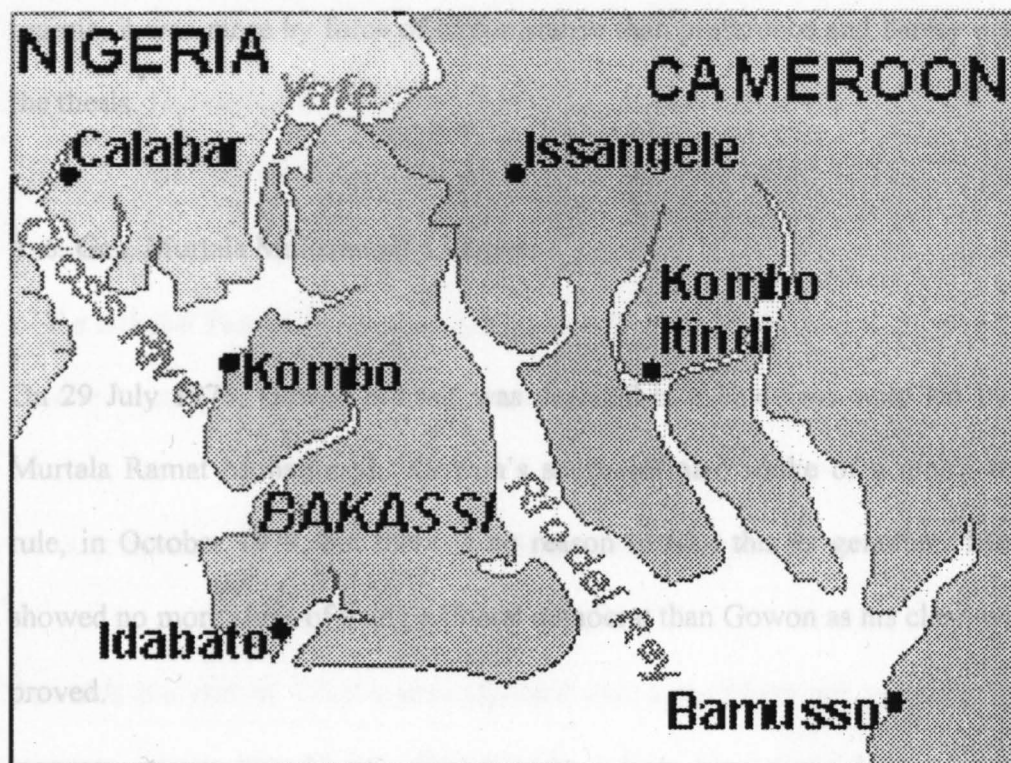
Ironsi was assassinated in one of the mutinies of Northern troops and Lt-Colonel Yakubu Gowon, the senior officer and chief of staff in Ironsi's cabinet, stepped into the power vacuum. Though in October 1970, Gowon announced 1976 as the target date for return to civilian rule, in 1974, he postponed it and never showed any thing other than autocratic tendencies.

4. 5. 1. Gowon's Policy towards Cameroon

Immediately after the war of 1967-70 the situation along the coastal border reached new dimensions when Cameroon used force to assert its authority. This resulted in the death of some Nigerians, arrests, intimidation and subsequent mass departure and eviction of Nigerian fishermen from the Bakassi Peninsula. Gowon's response might have been expected of a non-democrat.

Gen. Gowon, addressing a Nigerian audience, insisted that he would go to war rather than leave the Bakassi Peninsula for Cameroon. However, Gowon's intention was restrained by his own Ministry of Justice. It advised the regime not to contest the legal ownership of the Bakassi Peninsula. "Every effort should be exerted to ensure that Nigeria does not show ingratitude to a sister country that stood by it during the civil war" (Ate and Akinrinwa, 1992, p. 141). This recommendation, according to Ate and Akinrinwa, succeeded in preventing a war from taking place between the two. Instead it led to the Maroua agreement between President Ahidjo and Gowon between 1971 and 1975.

Figure 15. The Map of Bakassi Peninsula



Source: Afrol News. (2002). Available from :

http://www.afrol.com/News2002/cam006_nig_egg_bakassi.htm [Accessed 27 March 2002]

Nigeria has a history of border disputes with Benin. In 1976, Benin claimed sovereignty over a village in Shagari Local Government of Nigeria and changed the name of Gen. Gowon, addressing a Nigerian audience, insisted that he would go to war rather than leave the Bakassi Peninsula for Cameroon. However, Gowon's intention was restrained by his own Ministry of Justice. It advised the regime not to contest the legal ownership of the Bakassi Peninsula: "Every effort should be exerted to ensure that Nigeria does not show ingratitude to a sister country that stood by it during the civil war" (Ate and Akinterinwa, 1992, p. 141). This recommendation, according to Ate and Akinterinwa, succeeded in preventing a war from taking place between the two. Instead it led to the Maroua agreement between President Ahidjo and Gowon between 1971 and 1975.

Thus, though he undertook negotiations to resolve the single border dispute of his regime, it was more by force of circumstance than preference and hardly undermines the thesis.

4. 6. Gen. Murtala Muhammed's Regime

On 29 July 1976, Gowon himself was deposed in a bloodless coup led by General Murtala Ramat Muhammed. Gowon's successor also spoke of a return to civilian rule, in October 1979, but there is no reason to take this as genuine. Muhammed showed no more signs of being a liberal democrat than Gowon as his clash with Benin proved.

4. 6. 1. Muhammed's Policy towards Benin

Nigeria has a history of border disputes with Benin. In 1976, Benin claimed sovereignty over a village in Shaji in Sokoto State of Nigeria and changed the name of this village to Sein as well as preventing Governor Kangiwa's entry into some Nigerian villages in the district. Muhammed threatened military action against Benin if such action was repeated and as far as is known, although there is no official documentation available, the Benin withdrew its forces.

4. 6. 2. Muhammed's Policy towards Cameroon

The border dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon which developed during General Gowon's era continued during Gen. Murtala Muhammed's regime. Under

Muhammed's regime the Maroua accord, was renounced in the middle of 1975. Like a true autocrat Muhammed publicly denounced it and the Supreme Military Council – Nigeria's legislative body under Muhammed, refused to ratify it. Muhammed asserted that its ratification would have endangered Nigeria's vital offshore oil installations, in addition to conceding to Cameroon Nigeria's claim to the ownership of the Bakassi Peninsula. Muhammed even threatened to go to war rather than accept such an "outrageous agreement" (Ate and Akinterinwa, 1992, p. 6).

4. 6. 3. Muhammed's Policy towards Equatorial Guinea

Towards the end of 1975 it was reported that some Nigerians were maltreated by members of the Jeun Marcha Con Macias, one of the private militias and security services established by Macias Nguema to sustain his dictatorship in Equatorial Guinea. Agitation over what should be done to Bioko dominated the Nigerian Press just as they had in the early 1960s. A section of the Press and the Nigerian Trade Union Congress called on the government to annex Bioko. Some analysts were of the opinion that Nigeria should have attempted to annex Bioko in the 1960s. Muhammed issued a strong warning to the dictator (Macias Nguema) about his maltreatment of Nigerians in Equatorial Guinea. Whether he would have heeded the cries to annex it is unknown since an abortive coup claimed his life in Lagos on 13 February 1976 and the domestic problems which accompanied it, diverted Nigeria from the Equatorial Guinean issue. His two years in office however had given ample proof of his willingness to threaten force as a first resort. As a military man he only thought of military action.

ed clashes and extensive militarisation of the border area. Realising the frequency of the clashes between the two, Obasanjo, ordered the security agencies

4. 7. Gen. Obasanjo's Regime *ing Nigeria's territorial waters with Chad (New Nigeria, 1976).*

Following the assassination of General Muhammed in a failed coup, Muhamed's second-in-command, General Olusegun Obasanjo took over. His regime is difficult to categorise since in one sense he inherited military rule rather than chose it and he did in the end see through the process of Nigeria's return to democracy. The best method of judging therefore is by his works.

madugu-Yobe River and around the Lake Chad region (Asiwaju and Adeniyi, 1989, p. 209). In 1977, Niger constructed two dams on

4. 7. 1. Obasanjo's Policy towards Chad *lake Kalmalo in Sokoto State of Nigeria. The construction of the two dams disrupted irrigation projects in Sokoto State (Olusanya*

In 1976 there were Chadian armed incursions into Nigerian territory with attacks on Nigerian fishermen (Higgot and Fuglestad, 1975, p. 383). Relying on interviews conducted by the Nigerian Brigade Commanders serving in Maduguri province of Nigeria close to Chad, Jumare argues that most of the attacks were conducted by "breakaway units" of about 20-30 rebel Chadian soldiers, their motive being to disrupt and "get logistics". They were never part of an organised group. Nevertheless, Chad did officially complain that Nigeria had provided weapons for the Chadian rebel forces residing in the country as "refugees" and from there indulging in activities designed to disrupt the peace process and destabilise the government at Ndjamen. Another key issue affecting the security of the border region centred around the status of some islands in the Lake Chad region. The islands had been jointly claimed by the two countries owing to the fact that the border area had not been demarcated. Attempts by both parties to stake their claim by establishing effective control had resulted in armed clashes and extensive militarisation of the border area. Realising the frequency of the clashes between the two, Obasanjo, ordered the security agencies

to take defensive measures along Nigeria's territorial waters with Chad (New Nigeria, 1976).

Between July and August 1979, Federal and State elections were held. On October

4. 7. 2. Obasanjo's Policy towards Niger

returned to civilian rule. It was the first liberal democratic regime for 13 years. In

Niger during Obasanjo's time carried out what Nigeria deemed as hostile and aggressive policies along the Komadugu-Yobe River and around the Lake Chad region (Asiwaju and Adeniyi, 1989, p. 209). In 1977, Niger constructed two dams on the Rivers Lamido and Maggiya along Lake Kalmalo in Sokoto State of Nigeria. The construction of the two dams disrupted irrigation projects in Sokoto State (Olusanya and Akindele, 1986, p. 185). The damage, which the construction of the two dams had caused, made Obasanjo issue a warning to Niger. When there was no cooperation from Niger, he closed Nigeria's border with Niger.

1981 (Nwokedi, 1984 and 1985a, pp. 45-60). The Beninois ambassador in Lagos

It is true that Obasanjo certainly used force on both occasions that there were border disputes, though in his defence it can be said that these were essentially defensive rather than offensive or threatening strategies. Nevertheless one notes the absence of serious negotiations either before or after the incidents that one might have expected from a democratic regime. Overall, therefore, Obasanjo was still working within the mind set of a military leader, although not one that was using violence rashly like some of the other autocratic leaders of Nigeria.

Nigeria-Benin Joint Commission. It was this that recommended, after this crisis with

Benin that the two states should establish a "neutral zone" along their common border

and from which, all human activity was excluded (New Nigeria, 1981). In addition,

4. 8. President Alhaji Shehu Shagari's Regime

Between July and August 1979, Federal and State elections were held. On October 1979, Alhaji Shehu Shagari was inaugurated President of the state, as the country returned to civilian rule. It was the first liberal democratic regime for 13 years. In September 1983, President Shagari was re-elected for a further four-year tenure. His regime certainly inherited liberal democratic credentials.

4. 8. 1. Shagari's Policy towards Benin

The most serious of the border incidents between Nigeria and Benin was a reported incursion into and occupation of the Nigerian villages of Tungan Goge, Gulma and Tungachi in the Ilo district of Sokoto State of Nigeria by Beninois soldiers in March 1981 (Nwokedi, 1984 and 1985a, pp. 45-60). The Beninois ambassador in Lagos denied the story, but with widespread press reports about the incident received in Nigeria, the Nigerian authorities appeared to fuel speculation that they were contemplating a riposte. President Mathieu Kerekou of Benin sought a summit with his Nigerian counterpart. When Kerekou arrived in Lagos on 13 April 1981, Shagari secured his promise that Benin would not, under any circumstances, invade any part of Nigeria (Daily Times, 1981). It was a triumph of diplomacy.

Boundary relations were handled by the Shagari regime under the framework of the Nigeria-Benin Joint Commission. It was this that recommended, after this crisis with Benin that the two states should establish a "neutral zone" along their common border and from which, all human activity was excluded (New Nigeria, 1981). In addition,

to eliminate further incidents, the two states engaged in demarcating their international boundary. Shagari was happy to comply so as to avoid the use of force.

soldiers were reported killed and three others seriously wounded. (Day, 1982, p. 97).

4. 8. 2. Shagari's Policy towards Cameroon, 1983-4, p. 119)

The 1981 border dispute between Nigeria and Cameroon was the most acute and serious since independence and was a real challenge to the Shagari regime's democratic principles. Cameroon claimed sovereignty over eighteen villages in Enugu and the Bakassi Peninsula. Further, Cameroon *unilaterally* constructed a Dam on the upper reaches of the Benue River, which normally serves fishermen and farmers in Nigeria and Cameroon respectively. With the construction of the dam, fishing and agricultural activities in Nigeria's Gongola State were adversely affected. When the situation was becoming explosive, President Shagari considered not military action, but redress in the International Court of Justice, while he also brought the idea of a Nigeria-Cameroon two-man observatory team to determine the problems caused by the diversion of the Kalia River (called E1 Beid on the Cameroonian side) (National Concord, 1982, pp. 1, 24; Nigeria Call, 1982, p. 16). Once more negotiation and diplomacy prevailed over military solutions.

insulting statements regarding Cameroon's leaders. Even after Cameroon apologised

On 16 May 1981 fresh tension arose between Nigeria and Cameroon in the Bakassi Peninsula. The threat was such that Shagari felt obliged for defensive reasons to send 500 soldiers to protect its people in the region. Furthermore, troops were sent after Ibibio fishermen complained of incessant extortions, attacks and beatings made on them by Cameroonian police. The troops were deployed to the west of the peninsula and were, in mid-February 1982 doubled in number. Unfortunately diplomacy was

unable to resolve the issue and fishermen died in clashes. Eventually the unresolved situation led to an open confrontation between the two forces in which five Nigerian soldiers were reported killed and three others seriously wounded (Day, 1982, p. 97, Shaw and Aluko, 1983, p. 182, Yedder, *et al.*, 1983-4, p. 119).

There were immediate demands from Nigeria that Cameroon should apologise, pay damages and punish those soldiers involved. These demands also mentioned reconsideration of border agreements made between the Cameroon government and the previous military government of Nigeria. In Cameroon, it being itself an autocratic regime, there was no official mention of the incident. But Nigerian radio, easily heard in Cameroon, made no secret of the business and the rumour market in Cameroon was very active. Cameroon's policy was to keep the event as quiet and low-key as possible, preferring to settle it quickly and without great stress; and without allowing Cameroonian public opinion to become a factor in the settlement of the dispute. Nigerian policy was quite the opposite, with the government calling in the world press and in Nigerian radio stations (government-controlled) calling for severe penalties for Cameroon, including the use of military force. The Nigerian press, which is not government-controlled, called for revenge and made extremely insulting statements regarding Cameroon's leaders. Even after Cameroon apologised and agreed to pay damages the pressure was kept up.

Shagari emphasised the importance he attached to this affair by staying at home during the Organisation of African Unity's (now African Union) annual meeting in Nairobi. Besides, the matter had not been placed on the OAU agenda. Diplomats in Yaounde felt that war was very close, and Nigerian jets were ordered to buzz the new

Cameroon oil refinery in Victoria. Shagari was not however prepared to follow intimidation with full scale war, even though the Nigerian press attacked his government for its cowardice. In fact, Shagari was using the military pressure as a means of bringing Cameroon to the negotiating table to renegotiate the border settlement reached between President Ahidjo and the previous military governments of Nigeria. In January 1981, during what appeared to have been an amiable visit of President Shagari to Cameroon, Shagari raised the issue of border renegotiation. He argued that the military governments had no legal right to have entered into such an agreement and that, therefore, it was null and void.

On 1 August 1981, the Nigerian Foreign Minister, Professor Ishayu Audu, announced that an international arbitration tribunal would be set up to resolve the border disputes between the two countries (Yedder, *et al.*, 1983-4, p. 119). In the end therefore democratic principles prevailed.

4.9. Gen. Buhari's Regime

4.8.3. Shagari's Policy towards Chad

On 13 December 1983, Nigeria's liberal democracy was blown away as General In April 1983 the two countries' forces clashed in the Lake Chad region over fishermen's access to the waters. These unfortunate incidents, which were reported in the world press and *West Africa*, put the losses at 9 Nigerians and 75 Chadians with 20 Nigerians and 32 Chadians captured (Enchill and Nii, 1983, pp. 305-7). Shagari did not resort to force to resolve the problem. Instead the situation was brought under control by the Abuja Peace Meeting of July 1983. By this agreement both sides decided to revive the joint border patrols which had lapsed and to have the four-nation

Lake Chad Basin Commission take up border security issues and demarcate their common borders.

Following on from 13 years of autocratic rule Shagari's handling of border disputes makes a strong contrast to his autocratic predecessors. His restraint and willingness to seek peaceful settlements of problems was marked and persistence. If the use of military intimidation in the Cameroon dispute is an aberration it perhaps can be explained in terms of the domestic pressure he was under to a degree that autocrats no nothing of in their isolation. It was not the democratic way but to be fair to him he was using it to bring the democratic process of negotiation back on track. Certainly the degree to which it was a failure of democratic principles does not undermine the overall assessment that his was a liberal democratic regime that treated border disputes in a liberal democratic manner.

4. 9. Gen. Buhari's Regime

On 13 December 1983, Nigeria's liberal democracy was blown away as General Muhammed Buhari seized power through a military coup.

4. 9. 1. Buhari's Policy towards Chad

While there was by the beginning of Buhari's regime a general acceptance of the border status of some islands in the Lake Chad region by the close neighbours, the actual determination of the boundary on the ground was still disputed. The consensus was that even if the location of the two tripoints was precisely determined previously,

the marking had not been maintained and there was no indication that marker buoys were placed to show the boundaries over the waters of Lake Chad. The demarcation of the land sector over the Archipel de Bogomerol had never been done. And yet Lake Chad was a vital economic life-line to all the region's nationalities.

Attempts had been made in the early 1970s by the Lake Chad Commission to demarcate the Nigeria/Chad boundary as a part of the field completion exercise of 1/50,000 Topo Mapping, later undertaken by the Director of the Overseas Survey (Bach, 1980, pp. 264-5). This exercise had been stalled by the incessant conflict among the various Chadian factions in the civil war. The breakdown of security in the area and the heightened tension led to a series of skirmishes between the two countries. The worst of these was that reported under Shagari's regime in 1983, though the situation had been calmed by the Abuja Peace Meeting.

The 1983 conflict had exposed the inadequacies of the security arrangements in the Lake Chad border region. The topographical configuration of the basin compels the inhabitants to move from one area to the other. The lake is surrounded by several islands which appear and disappear depending on the level of the waters of the Lake. One of the crucial recommendations made after the eruption of the conflict was the establishment of Joint Nigeria/Chad Border Patrol Teams, consisting of security forces from both sides with the responsibility of overseeing the security of the area in order to prevent the activities of the Chadian rebel groups. It was not until after the meeting of the Security Sub-Commission of 6th to 8th August, 1985 in Maduguri that an acceptable definition of a patrol zone was arrived at, namely "the quadrilateral

formed by the lines joining the four patrol bases of Baga Sola (Chad), Blangura (Cameroon), Bga Kauwa (Nigeria) and Gadera (Niger)".

On 27 August 1983, General Buhari was overthrown in a palace coup led by General

One of the reasons for the volatility of this borderland area, especially after 1983, was the repeated attempts by each party to establish firm occupancy of those islands that they believed belonged to them. The matter was the more important because of the fishery resources for which the area is famous and on which so many people of both countries depended. In fact, in the attempt to control more of the fishing grounds, local conflicts have erupted between the Nigerian and the Chadian fishermen. The resources of Lake Chad are exploited as if the waters of the lake are international. The Lake Chad Basin Authority therefore had the role of determining the parameter governing economic activities in the lake's waters.

border villages in Borno State of Nigeria. Babangida had no time for negotiation.

Meanwhile the ongoing political crisis in Chad led to border disputes due to the mass influx of refugees from Chad to Nigeria. It should be noted that the boundary between Nigeria and Chad lacks clear demarcation in sections and has caused several cross-border incidents. In April 1984, Buhari without warning or agreement closed Nigeria's border with Chad in order to prevent the feared mass influx of refugees from Chad to Nigeria. It can be categorised as the use of force defensively. This one border dispute in his term in office is hardly conclusive but it is enough to suggest that as an autocrat he had little time for the niceties of democratic diplomacy.

Babangida, but despite this tension remained high between the two countries up to

October 1989 (Africa Research Bulletin, 1987, p. 8721).

4. 10. Gen. Babangida's Regime

On 27 August 1985, General Buhari was overthrown in a palace coup led by General Ibrahim B. Babangida, like Buhari spoke of returning Nigeria to democracy but his delays and final annulment of an election in which he appeared to lose showed his true colours.

4. 10. 1. Babangida's Policy towards Cameroon

Nigeria had alleged that Cameroon had effectively annexed some fishing villages along the two creeks leading to Cross River State of Nigeria's border. Tensions along the frontier continued, and in May 1987 Cameroon gendarmes occupied sixteen border villages in Borno State of Nigeria. Babangida had no time for negotiation. Instead the Nigerian National Security Council directed the Governors of all the States that share borders with Cameroon "to take military reprisal against any attacks along Nigeria's common borders with Cameroon".

After this clash with Cameroon, the Nigerian army intensified its border patrols and considered stationing permanent units on the frontiers. In order to avoid future clashes between the two close neighbours, President Paul Biya of Cameroon delegated Ibrahim Mbombo, his Information and Cultural Minister, to negotiate with Babangida, but despite this tension remained high between the two countries up to October 1989 (Africa Research Bulletin, 1987, p. 8721).

In 1990 the boundary demarcation was still in process, and minor clashes between border residents and transients continued. Deeper divisions were apparent when Yaounde media charged Nigerian agitators with instigating illegal demonstrations in Bamenda and at Yaounde University in May 1990 and with seeking to incite a popular revolt; the Nigerian media made counter-charges that Nigerians were being harassed, detained, tortured or murdered by Cameroonian security forces. In 1992, Babangida's government published an official map locating the Bakassi Peninsula in Nigerian territory for the first time. This was followed by an introduction of armed troops to the disputed area on 21 December 1993 in a threatening deployment. In other words he was not prepared to negotiate.

4. 10. 2. Babangida's Policy towards Niger

A clash occurred between the soldiers of the two countries near the border in Borno State of Nigeria in May 1989 when Nigerian soldiers and immigration officials were investigating reported crop damage by a cattle herd from Niger. Nigeria therefore closed its border with Niger. When cross-border armed incursions into the north-eastern zone of Nigeria by armed militants from the Republic of Niger began, Gen. Babangida ordered the military to crack down any found in Borno State villages. Furthermore, he established an effective cross-border defensive security system along Nigeria and Niger border. His cross-border security system prevented the flow of goods and services across the two neighbours' shared border, but it brought the incursions to a halt.

that Abacha was a full grown autocrat, perhaps the worse to occupy the office of head of state since Nigeria's independence. In domestic politics he was ruthless towards his enemies and indifferent to the people. How did his

Babangida was clearly a complex man politically. Though he came to power by force it was he who was to resign in 1993 to allow a civilian to become head of state. The same ambiguity is to be found in his policy towards border disputes. No one doubts the right to use force to defend territory when there are incursions from a neighbouring state, although his deployment of troops on the Cameroon border ended up looking more threatening than defensive. What does however seem to be lacking, however, is any attempt to enter into dialogue first or at least alongside the use of the military.

4. 11. Shonekan's Regime

After Babangida lost popular and military support following his annulment of the 1992 elections, he was forced to hand over in August 1993 to a prominent non-partisan businessman, Ernest Shonekan. Shonekan was to be an "interim civilian President" until new presidential elections could be held later that year. Yet the interim government lasted for only three months before the Defence Minister in Babangida's regime, 4. 12. General Sani Abacha seized power in a coup and assumed control of the Federal Military Government. In that short time his regime did not experience any border disputes.

4. 12. Gen. Abacha's Regime

No one can doubt that Abacha was a full grown autocrat; perhaps the worse to occupy the office of head of state since Nigeria's independence. In domestic politics he was ruthless towards his enemies and indifferent to the people. How did his values

translate to the border dispute scene? Strangely he found a lot of his time engaged with the International Court of Justice seeking to resolve matters.

forces Nigerians to register and vote in municipal elections". It protested against the

4. 12. 1. Abacha's Policy towards Cameroon
Cameroonian authorities in Bakassi and requested the Court to call the government of Cameroon to refrain from such conduct.

On 21 December 1993 there was once more an open confrontation between Nigeria and Cameroon over Bakassi Peninsula. In the following months the dispute over the ownership nearly degenerated into a war between the two (Africa Research Bulletin, 1994). On the 29 March 1994, Cameroon filed an application instituting proceedings against Nigeria at the International Court of Justice, contesting Cameroon's sovereignty over Bakassi Peninsula. On 6 June 1994, Cameroon filed an additional application extending the subject of the dispute to a further dispute relating to the question of sovereignty over a part of the territory of Cameroon in Lake Chad. Abacha's initial response was to send five hundred soldiers at the end of December 1994 into Bakassi as a defensive measure. Though it did increase tension between the two countries it appears to have been a purely defensive response to protect Nigerian citizens in Bakassi Peninsula. It was not until 13 December 1995, that Abacha's government responded to the International Court of Justice, filing preliminary objections to the admissibility of the claims of Cameroon.

elements from neighbouring Niger, Abacha ordered the soldiers who were stationed in the volatile region to attack

Only two months later on 3 February 1996 a clash occurred between the armed forces of the two countries after Nigeria claimed that Cameroonian authorities had forced her citizens in Bakassi Peninsula to register and vote in municipal elections. Back at the International Court of Justice, Cameroon, on 12 February 1996, asked the Court to indicate a provisional finding against Nigeria, for provoking the clashes between the

forces of the two countries on 3 February 1996. In response, Nigeria on 19 February 1996 placed a counter application with the court entitled "Cameroonian government forces Nigerians to register and vote in municipal elections". It protested against the organisation of municipal elections by the Cameroonian authorities in Bakassi and requested the Court to call the government of Cameroon to refrain from such conduct. In that application, Nigeria also asked the Court to warn Cameroon to desist from further harassment of Nigerian citizens in Bakassi until a final determination of the case pending in the Court.

4. 12. 2. Abacha's Policy towards Niger

From January 1998 there were cross-border armed incursions into the north-eastern zone of Nigeria by elements from Niger. Such attacks were frequent and destructive, covering areas not just within the immediate vicinity of Nigeria's northern and eastern borders, but also to the Middle-Belt region of Nigeria. Defenceless villagers and communities were the direct victims of such attacks. Many lives were lost, property looted, villages razed, cattle and livestock stolen, creating atmosphere of panic, terror, instability and insecurity in Nigeria. To put an end to the cross-border armed incursions into the northern-eastern part of Nigeria by elements from neighbouring Niger, Abacha ordered the troops that were stationed in the volatile region to attack the militants who attacked the villagers. In addition, Abacha established more effective cross-border security along the two countries' common border (Ate, et al. 1999, p. 21). From 1993 up to his death in 1998, Abacha's strategy in the border disputes, especially, took the form of a massive introduction of Nigerian security forces to the borders, followed by the writing of notes to the United Nations Security

Council, and the filing of applications to the United Nations (Doc.S/1994/228; Doc.S/1994/258; Guardian, 1996).

It is difficult to accuse Abacha of acting like an autocrat in his border policy. The dispute with Cameroon was largely conducted in the International Court of Justice although largely in response to Cameroon's initiative. Further his use of force on the borders of Cameroon and Niger seem to be defensive and justifiable. Unless he was not convinced of the strength and reliability of his forces, he does seem to have been less aggressive than would have been predicted for an autocrat.

4.13. Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar's regime

Abacha died suddenly and unexpectedly in 1998, leaving General Abdulsalami Abubakar to succeed him. His less than two-year tenure as a head of state was largely concerned with overseeing a transition to democracy in Nigeria. His military regime did not experience any border disputes between Nigeria and her immediate neighbours.

4.14. President Obasanjo's Regime

In the elections of 27 February 1998 the former General, Olusegun Obasanjo, was elected President of the country after fifteen years of military regime in Nigeria. After serving the full 5-year term he was re-elected on 29 May 2003. Since his military rule he had established himself as a democratic politician and it is interesting

to examine how his second regime differs from the first in terms of handling border disputes. 8). However, with the help of the United Nations Secretary General Kofi

Annan in 2003, President Obasanjo and the Cameroonian President, Paul Biya, were

4. 14. 1. Obasanjo's Policy towards Benin

Soon after his second term began, Obasanjo became exasperated at the Benin government's lack of cooperation in tackling problems such as people trafficking and the smuggling of cars stolen in Nigeria into Benin. His response in early August 2003 was to close the border with Benin in protest. He hoped that the action would focus minds. And this seems to have been the case. The following week he held a summit meeting with Benin's President, Mathieu Kerekou, at which the Nigerian leader extracted pledges of stronger cooperation. Kerekou's reward was that the border was reopened. It was strong politics but it was not undemocratic and was better than involving the military.

4. 14. 2. Obasanjo's Policy towards Cameroon

In September 2002 the heads of states of Nigeria and Cameroon met in Paris and negotiated possible solutions to the two neighbours' long standing border disputes. However, tension mounted between Nigeria and Cameroon on 10 October 2002, when the International Court of Justice awarded sovereignty of the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula to Cameroon. The International Court of Justice's ruling that Nigeria should "expeditiously and without condition withdraw its administration and military or police forces from the area of Lake Chad falling within Cameroonian sovereignty and from the Bakassi Peninsula" appeared offhand to Obasanjo and was rejected on

the grounds that the colonial demarcation of Bakassi is not acceptable (Guardian, 2002, p. 8). However, with the help of the United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan in 2003, President Obasanjo and the Cameroonian President, Paul Biya, were able to resolve some of their disputes through bilateral negotiation and other peaceful conflict management strategies.

4. 15. Conclusion

So far therefore there is little reason to deny that Obasanjo's democratic regime is acting democratically with regard to border disputes. His reaction to the findings of the International Court of Justice, which he had earlier committed himself to abiding by, was disappointing but it in part reflected domestic pressures and opinion, which as an elected leader he was not in a position to disregard. Negotiation is clearly his preferred method, but like any good politician he is looking for a settlement that he can sell to his domestic audience. The pre-eminence of negotiation is of course a contrast with his rule as a military leader. Then though he only used force defensively, there was nevertheless an absence of serious negotiations either before or after the incidents. It can be argued therefore that his change of politics led to a change in his policy towards border disputes as the thesis would predict.

Nature of response	Obasanjo's regime	Abacha's regime	Abacha's regime
Diplomacy	7 (28%)	7 (88%)	2 (16%)
Threat of force	1 (25%)	0	5 (42%)
Aggressive use of force	0	0	0
Defensive use of force	0 (0%)	1 (12%)	5 (42%)
Total of responses	20 (100%)	8 (100%)	12 (100%)

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This thesis set out to establish the relationship between regime type in Nigeria and the way border disputes are handled. The twelve regimes that have held power since independence were categorised by their overall conduct and values as either liberal democratic or autocratic. The thesis predicted that liberal democratic regimes would handle border disputes primarily by diplomacy, rather than by force or the threat of force. Force would only be used with great reluctance and after all other means of resolution had been exhausted. On the other hand, the thesis predicted that autocratic regimes would handle border disputes in a very different way to liberal democratic ones. Not that they would eschew all diplomacy, for at times it can achieve national or personal goals, but they would not hold *on principle* that diplomacy must come first. On the contrary, their instinct would be to quickly resolve disputes by a display of force, unconcerned about what criticism this may attract from the Nigerian public or international community. The evidence has been summarised in Figure XX.

Figure XXX. Border dispute responses

Nature of dispute Response	All Regimes	Liberal Democratic Regimes	Autocratic Regimes
Diplomacy	9 (45%)	7 (88%)	2 (16%)
Threat of force	5 (25%)	0	5 (42%)
Aggressive use of force	0	0	0
Defensive use of force	6 (30%)	1 (12%)	5 (42%)
Total of responses	20 (100%)	8 (100%)	12 (100%)

As the figure XX shows, eighteen border disputes were found to have occurred in the period 1960-2003, 7 under liberal democratic regimes and 11 under autocratic regimes. In fact only three regimes did not experience them (namely Ironsi, Shonekan and Abubakar, none of whom was in office more than a year) and that was owing to their brevity. In other words, border disputes have been endemic in Nigeria's history for 40 years. The disputes can also be analysed by head of state as Figure YYY

Figure YYY. Response Border Disputes by Heads of State

Regime	Balewa	Ironsi	Gowon	Muhammed	Obasanjo	Shagari	Buhari	Babangida	Shonekan	Abacha	Abubakar	Obasanjo
Regime Type	Lib D	Autoc	Autoc	Autoc	Autoc	Lib D	Autoc	Autoc	Autoc	Autoc	Autoc	Lib D
Benin	Dip			TForce		Dip						Dip
Cameroon	Dip		Dip	TForce		Dip + DForce		TForce		DForce + Dip		Dip
Chad					DForce	Dip	DForce					
Eq. Guinea				TForce								
Niger					TForce			DForce		DForce		

Key:

Dip Diplomacy

Dforce Defensive use of force

Tforce Threat of force

Lib D Liberal democratic

Autoc Autocratic

In analysing the responses we are dealing with twenty responses to the 18 conflicts, since in two instances regimes used two distinct types of response in the same dispute (namely Shagari and Abacha towards Cameroon; both using defensive force and diplomacy). Taking the overall pattern of response irrespective of regime type to border disputes, 9 (45%) were handled with diplomacy, 5 (25%) used the threat of force, 6 (30%) used force defensively, and none used force aggressively. Thus, though no regime regarded a border conflict in and of itself sufficient as grounds to go to war, the levels of response differed markedly and fairly evenly across the spectrum from negotiation to force. It is only when the figures are disaggregated into regime type that we see a striking difference.

Taking the liberal democratic regime response pattern, namely that of Balewa, Shagari and Obasanjo II, of the 8 recorded responses, in 7 (88%) cases diplomacy was used and in only 1 (12%) case was defensive force used (Shagari as regards Cameroon). None used force aggressively or threatened force.

Just how remarkably distinct the liberal democratic pattern appears when it is contrasted with the autocratic responses. There 12 autocratic responses recorded, 2 (16%) cases used diplomacy, 5 (42%) cases saw force threatened and 5 (42%) cases saw force was used defensively. The contrast with the liberal democratic regimes could hardly be more stark. It is evident that regime type does indeed shape policy towards border disputes. Democratic regimes are a force for peace despite the persistence of issues that have the potential to cause violent conflict. No liberal democratic regime misused its armed forces and clearly preferred the way of negotiation. Given that the history of the borders themselves, as the thesis has

shown, has left a legacy of unresolved problems, future crises can be anticipated with the same frequency as the past thirty years. As the study has shown, past disputes have concerned the imprecise nature of the boundaries, the use of the existing natural resources laying in the common border, such as the sharing of Lake Chad (Nwokedi, 1985b, p. 47) and mal-treatment of Nigerian communities residing in her neighbouring countries by the security agents of her immediate neighbours. Unfortunately most of these still remain unsettled to this day. But what has changed on the African continent is the arrival in the 1990s of liberal democratic regimes. Many have commented on the weakness and formal nature of their quality, including that of Nigeria's democracy. But as the Nigerian case proves, even when democracy is far from handing significant power to the people and when there is still only limited accountability, nevertheless the acceptance of even a minimum of democratic values does make a difference on the international stage in terms of reducing conflict. This is good news for the continent.

The significance of the nature of the regime handling a conflict does not of course just apply to Nigeria, but also to the country with which it is in dispute. Certainly one would expect Nigeria to find it easier to deal with disputes using negotiation if the other party is also so inclined. Although the data presented cannot conclusively prove this, it is worth noting that both Balewa and Obasanjo II were dealing with formally liberal democratic disputes when they negotiated with Benin and Cameroon. This is not to distract from their achievement. On the contrary it enhances the thesis that democratic regimes will turn first to diplomacy. Where both parties are of like mind a successful agreement is most likely. The findings of this study do lend support to the democratic-peace theory's argument that

democratic states are less likely to go to war against other democratic regimes (Baldwin, 1993; Kegley, 1995).

Though the thesis has focused on the nature of the regime and its leader in determining the nature of the handling of border disputes, external parties played a part. Surprisingly, the OAU played only a minimal role. Founded in 1963 by 32 independent Africa states, its founding Charter spoke of 'respect for the territorial integrity of each state'; and of 'peaceful settlement of disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation or arbitration'. On the basis of these principles it might have been expected that the member countries would not use force to resolve disputes and that the OAU would use sanctions if members did resort to force. And in 1964, at the second OAU summit, it passed a resolution on the Intangibility of Frontiers, which stated that 'all member states pledge to respect the borders existing on the achievement of national independence'. Yet, for many, this was not a statement that encouraged peace, but one that was seen as a frustration of their attempts to resolve 'unfair' and unresolved borders inherited at independence. The end result was that the OAU became a toothless authority as regards resolving border disputes. The so called 'trade union of dictators' was seen as the preserver of the status quo and not as the place to go to bring constructive change to borders.

Ad hoc groups in Africa, however, played a part: Shagari turned to an international arbitration tribunal to assist with the Cameroon dispute (Yedder, et al., 1983-4, p. 119) and used with effect the four-nation Lake Chad Basin Commission to alleviate problems in that area. But it was international arbitration based outside of Africa that proved the more effective. In particular, the role of the International Court of

Justice was important on two occasions. Abacha may not have thought of going to the Court over the Cameroon crisis himself, but he willingly engaged in the process in 1994. An application by Cameroon instituting proceedings against Nigeria over the Bakassi Peninsula and over a part of the territory of Cameroon in Lake Chad area brought a robust counter-claim by Abacha's government in 1995. And the military clashes of both sides in 1996 brought both to the Court again that year. The Court may not have solved the problem but it certainly helped to defuse some of the military activity.

Lawal Mohammed Musir, on 29 October 2002, Ankara. Lawal Mohammed Musir is the Nigerian Ambassador to Turkey

Obasanjo also turned to the Court in 2002 after bi-lateral negotiations between Cameroon and Nigeria in Paris over the Bakassi achieved little. Obasanjo, however, was not prepared to accept in full the Court's ruling in October 2002, that Bakassi Peninsula belonged to Cameroon and that Nigeria should withdraw its administration and security forces speedily from the contested area there and in Lake Chad. Yet the Court's arbitration was not a total failure since the contested judgement led to the involvement of the United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan. This finally brought forth the sought agreement.

Interview with Ogata Ocho, on 7 December 2002, Lagos. Ogata Ocho is a research fellow and a member of the Division of International Law and Organisation at the Research Department, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos, Nigeria

Interview with J. Sabajo Wiah, on 4 December 2002, Lagos. J. Sabajo Wiah is a diplomat at the Embassy of the Republic of Liberia, Lagos, Nigeria

Interview with Jimi Peters, on 4 December 2002, Lagos. Jimi Peters is a research fellow and a member of the Division of International Law and Organisation at the Research Department, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos, Nigeria

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Interview with Lawal Mohammed Munir, on 29 October 2002, Ankara. Lawal Mohammed Munir is the Nigerian Ambassador to Turkey.

Interview with Charles Eze Ojukwu, on 29 October 2002, Ankara. Charles Eze Ojukwu is the Minister at the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Ankara, Turkey.

Interview with Salihu Ahmed Sambo, on 18 November 2002, Tehran. Salihu Ahmed Sambo is the Minister at the Embassy of The Federal Republic of Nigeria, Tehran, Iran.

Interview with Roseline I. Turay, on 4 December 2002, Lagos. Roseline I. Turay is the First Secretary/Consular Officer at the High Commission, Lagos, Nigeria.

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Interview with Jimi Peters, on 4 December 2002, Lagos. Jimi Peters is a research fellow and a member of Division of International Law and Organisation at the Research Department, Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos, Nigeria.

Interview with Dan Barma Aboubakar, on 16 December 2002, Abuja, Nigeria. Dan Barma Aboubakar is the First Secretary at the Embassy of the Republic of Niger, Abuja, Nigeria.

Interview with Ahmat Hisseini, on 16 December 2002, Abuja. Ahmat Hisseini is the First Secretary at the Embassy of the Republic of Chad, Abuja, Nigeria.

Interview with Geruais Houndekindo, on 16 December 2002, Abuja. Geruais Houndekindo is the Minister Counsellor at the Embassy of the Republic of Benin, Abuja, Nigeria.

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